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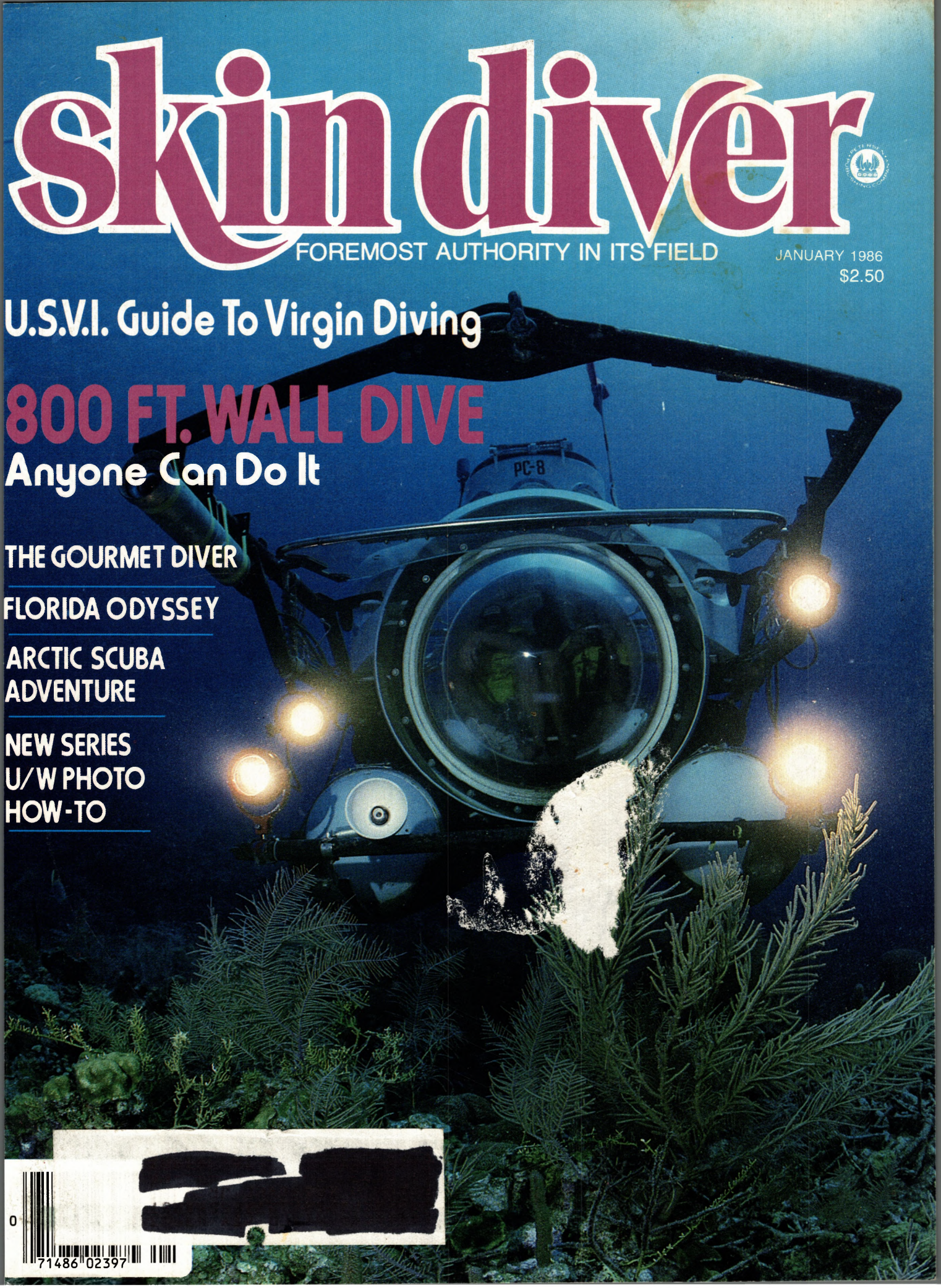
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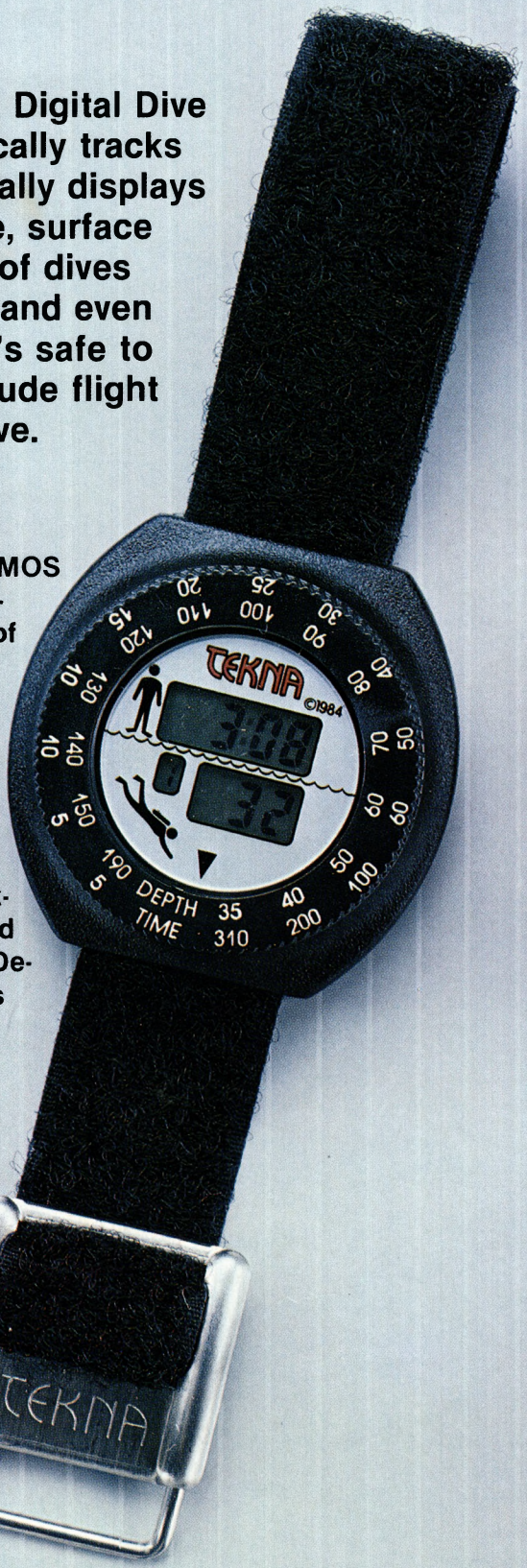
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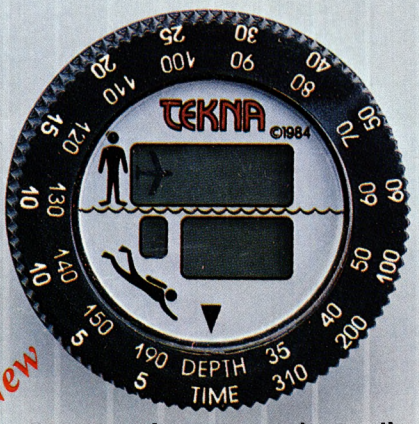
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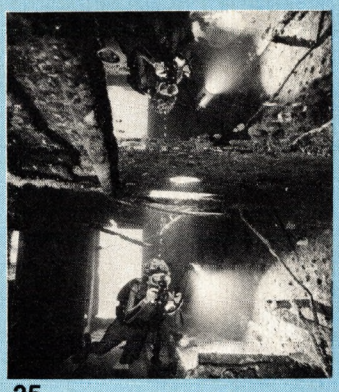
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COVER

Research Submersibles Limited's PC-8 deepsea submarine takes two passengers over the wall at Grand Cayman for an 800 foot deep dive. For more on this exciting adventure see page 22. Photo/Geri Murphy.



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Diver's Calendar

CA WRECK DIVERS BANQUET

The California Wreck Divers' annual banquet will be held on the *Princess Louise*, San Pedro, California, **January 11**. The master of ceremonies will be Duncan Mathewson, chief archaeologist for treasure hunter Mel Fisher. Mathewson will present a program on the *Atocha* discovery and salvage.

For information contact Bill Wilson (213) 306-7822 or David Lee (818) 576-8293.

SEAS '86

Seas '86, the sixth annual scuba conference and underwater film festival, will be held **February 28-March 2** in Raleigh, NC. Jean-Michel Cousteau will be the featured speaker and, in addition to the film festival, there will be workshops on diving science, medicine, shelling and more. The DAN accident management course will be taught as will a course on U/W archaeological research diving.

For more information contact Doug Young, Seas, P.O. Box 31186, Raleigh, NC 27622; (919) 781-0559.

AID DIVE

The Twelfth Annual AID Dive (An Ice Dive) will take place **February 8** at Elora Quarry, Ontario, Canada. Sponsored by the Kitchener Waterloo and District Underwater Association, the event will raise money for charity. It is a ten hour marathon dive with each buddy team spending 30 minutes under the ice.

For more information write 135 Vintage Cr., Kitchener, Ontario N2P 1L1 or phone (519) 894-1839.

ST. PETERSBERG SHELL SHOW

The St. Petersberg Shell Club will present its 39th Annual Shell Show **February 14-16** at the Community Center, 1 Park Place at 106th Avenue, Treasure Island, Florida. The show is put on by collectors who prepare museum quality exhibits from their collections. Shells and related items will be on sale.

For information contact St. Petersberg Shell Club, 440 75th Ave., St. Petersberg Beach, FL 33706.

GREAT LAKES SHIPWRECK FESTIVAL

The Ninth Annual Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival will be held **February 15** at the Ford World Headquarters Auditorium. Sponsored by the Ford Sea Horses Scuba Club, the event will include a divers' forum, artifacts display and film festival.

For information contact M. Grammer, 1841 N. Denwood, Dearborn, MI 48128; (313) 561-8393.

SARASOTA SHELL SHOW

The Annual Shell Show, sponsored by the Sarasota Shell Club, will be held **February 21-23** at the Exhibition Hall, 801 N. Tamiami Tr., Sarasota, FL. For information contact Bet Hamilton, 1240 Primrose, Venice, FL 33595.

FROZEN FIN DIVE

The 22nd Annual Frozen Fin Dive, sponsored by South Eastern Connecticut Skin Divers (SE-CONN), will be held at New London Town Beach, Pequot Ave., New London, CT on **January 1.** Registration is at 10:00 am and the dive will be at noon.

For information contact Bill Little (203) 447-2564, or Brian Johnson (203) 599-3484.

BOSTON ACTIVITIES

Three important events will occur **March 1** in Boston, Massachusetts:

The Boston Diving Show will be held at the Park Plaza Hotel, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. The event will include daytime seminars and equipment exhibits. Tickets are $7 by mail.

The Underwater Film Review will be held at John Hancock Hall at 8:00 pm. Jack McKenney's Dive to Adventure program will be featured. Tickets are $7 when ordered by mail.

Professional Scuba Inspection's Visual Cylinder Inspector (VCI) training course, featuring Bill High, will also be held at the Park Plaza Hotel.

For information or tickets to these events contact: Fred Calhoun, P.O. Box 291, Back Bay Annex, Boston, Massachusetts 02117.

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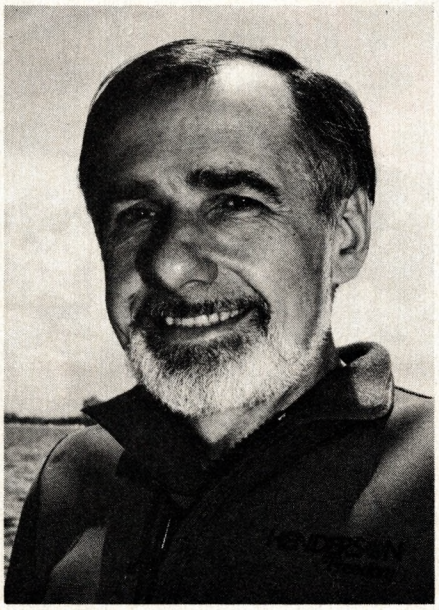


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SDM Editorial

BY THE PUBLISHER



WINTER WORK-OUTS MAINTAIN DIVE FITNESS

One of the most difficult problems facing the certified diver is staying fit. Once the scuba class is finished and the novelty of those first few open water dives has worn off, the new diver may find himself slacking off. Perhaps it's the arrival of winter or maybe intensive school studies that cause the diver to stray. Within a month to six weeks of inactivity the diver has literally lost the muscle strength and stamina he worked so hard to build up during scuba class. In other words, he's back where he started.

How can you stay completely fit for diving, so you may go off on a dive trip whenever you choose? The obvious answer is to keep diving on a regular basis if it is humanly possible. Two dive trips per month is the minimum activity to maintain an acceptable degree of fitness. If you are having difficulty finding dive buddies or space on a dive boat, you might consider enrolling in some type of organized educational activity. Specialty courses on photography, wreck diving and U/W navigation, etc., offer opportunities for organized dive outings.

If regularly scheduled weekend dives are an impossibility, then regular workouts in a swimming pool could be a good alternative—provided those visits are really an organized workout and not just a quick dip. An average diver in good condition should be able to swim a minimum of one-quarter mile with fins and mask (no snorkel) with a rest stop. This type of exercise maintains leg muscle tone as well as keeping the respiratory and circulatory systems up to par. A workout two or three times a week is adequate for maintaining good dive fitness. Incidentally, a scuba instructor should be able to do a one-half mile minimum swim.

For those divers who are out of shape and know it, the job is more difficult. It means starting from the beginning and rebuilding muscles, stamina, strength, skills and confidence. But how do you get started when you haven't been diving for six months? One of the best ways is to design a simple, but rigid, get-back-into-shape program. The first step is to establish a goal; a specific date a couple of months away. The target date might be a dive vacation, a long weekend dive trip, the start of lobster season or whatever.

The next step is a self-appraisal of your present physical condition. Just how bad is it? How many laps of a swimming pool can you do without being completely exhausted? How much overweight are you? How far can you swim underwater on one breath? Write all this information down, for it will serve as your personal standard of comparison throughout the next few weeks of training.

Then, set up a program of exercise that will occur during the six to eight weeks prior to your dive date. The exercise can be arranged to conveniently fit your lifestyle, but should include at least three to four visits to the pool each week. Business executives may find it more convenient to swim at lunch time, while others might find evenings and Saturday afternoons better.

The important thing here is your commitment. Once you start, let nothing stand in the way of accomplishing your regular exercise schedule. Don't let unexpected business appointments, a special TV program, visiting relatives, or a basketball game stand in the way of your exercise program. Make it the most important thing in your life and it may very well save your life.

What kind of exercise is best? Swimming, naturally. Sit-ups and jogging may be fine for improving circulation and wind, but only swimming will exercise those specific muscles you use in diving. Start out slowly with a minimum number of pool laps, increasing during each successive session. In a month of exercising four times per week, a person can easily work up from four laps to a possible one-quarter mile swim.

A few words of caution should be kept in mind while going through this program—improvement often comes slowly. Just stick with it on a steady basis. Don't attempt severe dieting while going through such an exercise program—you're going to need the energy to build up your strength.

Six to eight weeks of regular swimming and diving exercise will work wonders for you. Physically, you'll look better, feel better and most probably sleep a lot better. Mentally, you will have restored your confidence in your diving ability—and thus built up your immunity to possible panic underwater. Another benefit from such a program is restored dive skills. You again feel familiar with such basics as clearing your mask, emptying a snorkel and making a surface dive. You can now return to open water diving a much healthier and happier diving enthusiast. But most important—you're a lot safer than that other guy who is wheezing and puffing his way around the ocean.

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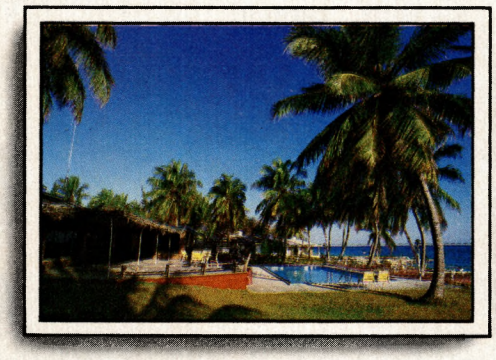
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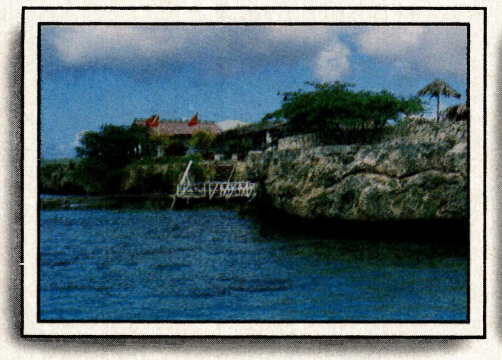
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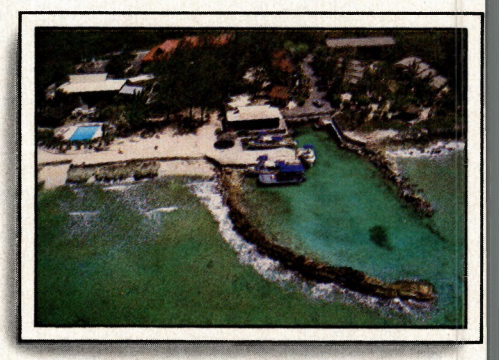
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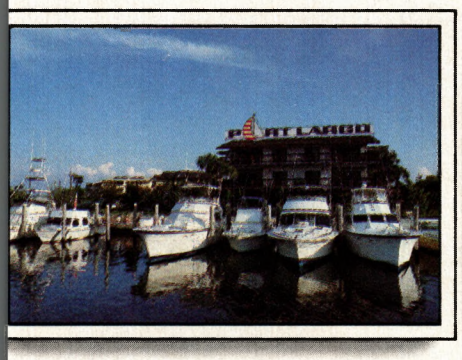
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Scuba Quiz

Category: Diving Environment

Topic: River Diving

By Dennis Graver

Diving in rivers can be exciting and fun. The best freshwater dives I have ever made have been in rivers. They can also pose special problems to the diver, however, and you need to be aware of the hazards of and the established practices for river diving if you intend to dive in them. See how familiar you are with river diving by taking this month's quiz. The answers are on the following page.

1. It is best to dive against the current in a river.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

2. Always have a buddy within touching distance when river diving.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

3. River currents are strongest at the surface and on the outside of bends.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

4. Currents in rivers tend to flow straight down the river.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

5. There are special equipment requirements for river diving.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

6. Extra weight should be added to your belt for river dives.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

7. If being carried toward a potential hazard, swim at a right angle to the object to avoid it.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

8. If being pulled downward by a current, the only option is to ride it out.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

9. Searches in rivers are successful more frequently than searches in other bodies of water.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

10. Diving conditions in rivers tend to remain fairly constant compared to other bodies of water.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

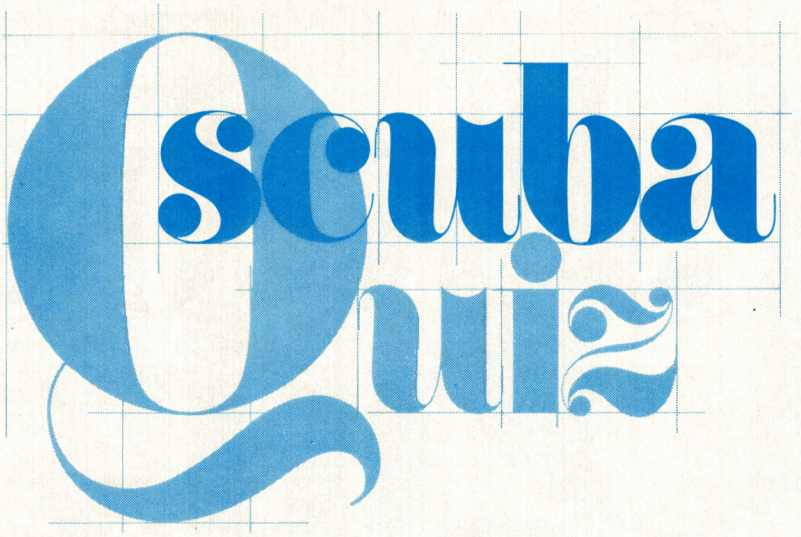
11. If being carried toward a large, round boulder in a river, you are in danger of being carried directly into it.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

12. The right and left banks of a river are named relative to the downstream course of the river.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

13. If drifting down a river in a strong current, it is OK to grab hold of something to stop as long as your buddy does the same.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False

14. List ten potential hazards that may be found in rivers: _____

15. There is no formal, sanctioned training available for river diving.
☐ A. True
☐ B. False



Answers: River Diving

1. B. False. Working against the current can lead to exhaustion. Although you are supposed to begin dives against the current, the rule doesn't apply when the current is strong. Also, strong river currents orient obstructions so they point downstream. You would run directly into obstructions by going upstream.

2. B. False. A diver should be tended on a line when the water is turbid and this is the case in most rivers. In addition to a tender, a standby diver should be present and ready to enter the water. This type of diving requires special training, but it is definitely the safest approach.

3. A. True. Laminar flow occurs in rivers. Layers of water move at different velocities at different depths. The closer to the bottom, the slower the flow. Water does accelerate around the outside of bends in rivers. The current on the bends also causes undercutting of the bank there and divers need to be aware of this as well.

4. B. False. The banks of the river, the bed of the river and objects within the river all tend to set up countercurrents and eddies, which change frequently. While the overall trend is for water to move downstream, it does so in a zig-zag fashion, and divers need to know that the water can flow across a river and even in the opposite direction to the main flow.

5. A. True. Since being tended is recommended, a harness and line are necessary. A helmet, knee and elbow pads are also recommended. A back-up scuba unit is also a good idea.

6. B. False. Extra weight is helpful when diving in currents, but it should *not* be added to your belt. The use of a weighted line or hand-held weights is permissible, however.

7. B. False. If you swim at a right angle, you increase your cross-sectional area and will be carried toward the object faster by the current. Swim away from the object at about a 45 degree angle and you will have a better chance of avoiding it.

8. B. False. It is often best to ride out a down-running current in a river, but if the current is not too strong and you can use a leverage point, you may be able to push off at an angle and catch an outside current to avoid being pulled down.

9. B. False. Even though the area is confined, currents, obstructions and poor visibility cause river searches to have poor success rates compared to other bodies of water.

10. B. False. Rivers are particularly prone to seasonal changes and are often extremely unpredictable. Knowledge from local, experienced divers is essential.

11. B. False. When the water flows against an object, such as a boulder, it builds up a back pressure that diverts on-coming water around the object. You are carried around the boulder along with the water flowing around it. This cushion effect does *not* occur with pointed rocks or large, flat surfaces, however.

12. A. True. The right bank of a river is the bank on the right side when you are facing downstream.

13. B. False. If you grab hold of an object in a strong current, there is a good chance that your mask will be swept away. It is best to just "go with the flow."

14. Potential Hazards: Trees, tree limbs, wire, fishing line, fishing hooks, fishing lures, fishing nets, log jams, debris, cars, rapids, sucking holes, whirlpools, countercurrents, strong currents and poor visibility.

15. B. False. More than one diver training agency allows instructors to obtain sanctioning for specialties such as river diving or swift water diving. Limited visibility training is also available and would be useful for those who need or want to dive in rivers.

I hope you realize that diving in rivers definitely requires special training. The activity can be extremely exciting and rewarding, but it should only be attempted under very controlled circumstances. If you haven't dived the Lower Colorado or another clear, interesting river, you really should give it a try, but only with the necessary training, preparation, orientation and support. River diving can be fun!

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Technifacts

BY E.R. CROSS



It is little wonder that SKIN DIVER Magazine readers are from all around the world. Diving is now practiced on a worldwide basis with the sport divers outnumbering commercial divers by about 1,000 to one. However, many sport divers periodically engage in diving for pay, which makes them—at least on a temporary basis—commercial divers. Because of this worldwide interest in both sport and commercial diving, Technifacts, too, covers diving worldwide.

AUSTRALIA

Members of the Maritime Archaeological Unit (the MAU), a division of the Victoria Archaeological Survey (the VAS), lead a busy and exciting life in the sea. Between November 1984 and February, 1985, the MAU maintained an active and productive work program. The MAU has statutory responsibility for shipwreck sites in both state and commonwealth waters in Australia. Members of the MAU have been involved with inspections of several new sites. A list of these indicates a lot of interesting diving:

A. An unknown wreck at Venus Bay; considered to be part of the 387 ton barque *Duke of Wellington* (1839—1843).

B. Wilson's Promontory; investigation of looting reports.

C. Reinspection of an unidentified site in West Channel, Port Phillip Bay.

D. Reinspection of wreckage considered to be the 389 ton ship *Sea* (1847—1853).

E. Inspection of unidentified wooden wreckage at Point Nepean.

F. An inspection of the early paddle-wheel steamer *Clonmel* (1836—1841) at Port Albert.

G. Reinspection of the site of the 194 ton brig *Mountain Maid* (1841—1856) in West Channel, Port Phillip Bay.

H. Reinspection of the wreck of the 250 ton brig *William Salthouse* (1824—1841) near Popes Eye, Port Phillip Bay. Test excavations of the *William Salthouse* were also carried out by the MAU from March 19 through April 29, 1983.

I. Inspection of unidentified wreckage at Shire Hall Beach, Mornington. This is considered to be part of a small Tasmanian vessel.

J. An underwater inspection of the 520 ton ship *Light of the Age* (1863—1868) west of Port Phillip Head.

K. Inspection of the remains of the 1,474 ton iron ship *Sierra Nevada* (1877—1900) east of Port Phillip Head.

The MAU was also awaiting funds and suitable weather (both familiar phrases to



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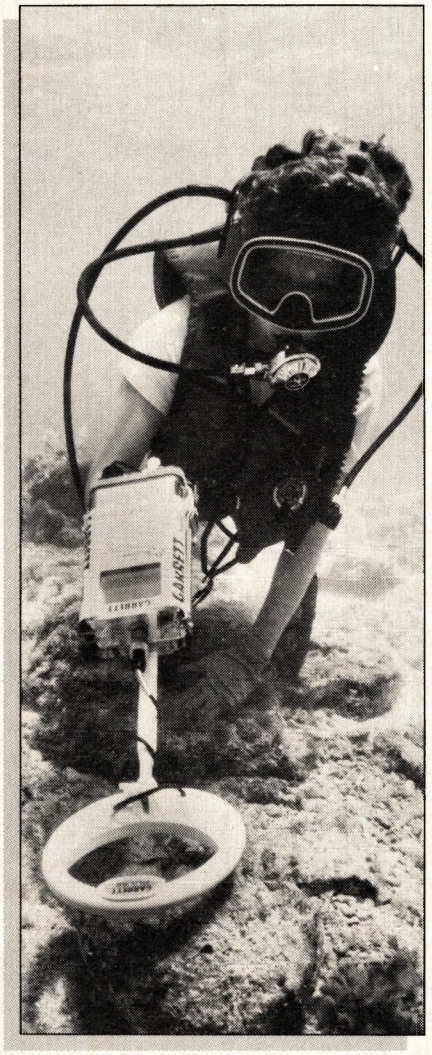
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all underwater archaeologists) to dive wrecks on Victoria's rugged west coast. The sites that need inspection and evaluation include those of the vessel *Loch Lord* (1873—1878); *Schomberg* (1855—sank on her maiden voyage); *La Bella* (1893—1905); and the vessel *Children* (1824—1839).

In a copy of the Victoria Archaeological Survey Newsletter recently received, Peter Harvey, MAU research officer, stated, "Since beginning work at VAS about a year ago, I have been involved in the full range of MAU activities such as work on the Port Fairy *Thistle* test excavation and the *Monumental City* wreck inspection. My other responsibilities in the MAU have been to conduct background archival research into Victorian wrecks, set up card indexes of Victorian shipwrecks, catalog the books held by MAU and issue permits for the *William Salthouse* wreck off Queenscliff and to maintain records of the number of divers visiting the site."

Tony Boardman, MAU technical director, has also had an exciting and rewarding season working with wreck sites. He said, "Apart from the purchase of ready-made equipment, there are times when the specialized nature of the work makes it necessary to design and construct our own. One notable success in this area has been an improved type of dredge for removing sediment from wreck sites. This is to be used, I believe, on the *Sydney Cove* expedition later this year. Currently I am working on a voice activated submersible tape recorder to assist in the accurate documentation of our U/W work."

KWAJALEIN ATOLL

A sport diver who had spent some time diving the wrecks of Kwajalein found several glass ampules he thought would make excellent souvenirs. Fortunately U.S. Customs agents entered the picture and had the contents analyzed prior to allowing them into the United States.

The small clear vials contained aconitine, a white crystalline alkaloid that is a severe depressant and a violent poison; the large brown vials contained silver nitrate (a poison) and silver acetate; and the black particles in other bottles turned out to be carbon black absorbed with gas similar to phosgene, a deadly chemical warfare agent. These "souvenirs" were declared dangerous and were destroyed.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

A diver reported, "Just recently I found a 105mm artillery shell; just the bullet end. It weighed about 15 pounds. It had a brass head and an inner cylinder of brass." This "souvenir" is also very dangerous. Many years ago I did a job in Utah involving the recovery of a truck

load of 105mm shells that had gone off a cliff into the reservoir behind a dam. Of the 540 rounds of 105mm shells I recovered from 80 feet of zero visibility water, several had to be detonated at a safe distance by an ordnance technician because they were too dangerous to handle. One, not considered dangerous, exploded while being unloaded at an army depot and killed a couple of workers.

All military ordnance, including old cannon balls and the like and all unidentified material from warships, military planes and combat vehicles, should be left alone until they can be checked by qualified personnel. Don't add to potential problems by handling and recovering unknown objects or material. It can be downright dangerous to your health.

PITTSBURG, PA

A Technifacts reader wrote about "one of the great legends of Pittsburg; the missing B-25 bomber." This 10 ton plane with a 70 foot wingspan crashed into the Monongahela River near the Homestead High Level bridge on January 31, 1956. It has never been found (as of July 1985). The reader continued, "One of the myths about this plane is that it sank in the muddy bottom of the river because it was loaded with gold for a payroll." Truly, that sounds like a myth backed up by a fabulous fable.

LAHAINA, HAWAII

The U.S. Navy salvage force did raise the submarine *Bluegill* and then re-sank it in water much too deep for those who once liked to dive on this exciting wreck. The sub was blamed for many cases of the bends. Also, the Navy had promised the State of Hawaii they would remove the sub from its shallower water site when it was no longer needed for training sub-rescue crews in making false seats of the McCann rescue bell on the submarine's escape hatches. This was the device used in 1939 to rescue men trapped in the submarine *Squalus*; the first and only time this device was ever used in an actual rescue operation.

ALVERSTOKE, GOSPORT, HANTS, U.K.

The U.K. Institute of Naval Medicine reported on a 20 year study of decompression sickness treatment records. Their findings indicated that additional pressurizations for treating non-responding cases of serious decompression sickness are of little use except in cases without motor deficit.

CIGARETTES AND DIVING

The Undersea Journal (1st Quarter, 1985) reported on the three basic problems suffered by smokers. Two of them, reduced wind capacity and the formation of carboxyhemoglobin by the binding of the carbon monoxide of cigarette smoke to the hemoglobin in the blood, apply to

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non divers as well as to divers. The third potential threat to a diver's health is that cigarette smoke increases airway resistance and partial or complete airway obstruction by the stationary mucus. This can lead to lung tissue damage during a normal ascent from a dive. In severe cases, it could lead to an air embolism. In the Undersea Journal the author recommends that divers avoid smoking cigarettes at least two hours before diving.

As a testimony to this, I started my diving career in 1934 when I was a heavy smoker. In 1942, during a diving job in Panama, I was having trouble getting enough air in my lungs to provide the oxygen needed for heavy exertion. It was either quit smoking or quit diving. I quit smoking and continued diving without problems for another 42 years. Try quitting completely, it will be good for your health.

BELIZE NEWSLETTER

Belize Promotions, travel advisors, is publishing Belize Currents. This monthly newsletter features the scuba diving, snorkeling and tourism related activities in the Caribbean nation of Belize. The first issue was published in August. That issue was dated September to coincide with the anniversary of the independence of Belize granted by Great Britain on September 21, 1981.

Belize Promotions arranges vacations, scuba diving and fishing trips, archaeological and nature study tours to Belize. Contact Belize Promitions, 720 Worthshire, Houston, Texas, 77008; (713) 869-3614.

FREE DAN MATERIAL

Divers Alert Network is a medical assistance hotline and information service for divers and health care workers. Once federally supported, this needed organization is financed by a membership association of safety minded divers. Only $15 per year keeps diving medical expertise just a phone call away, 24 hours a day, and also provides useful information.

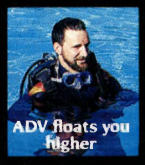
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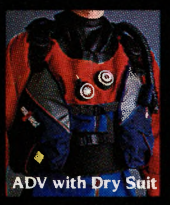




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The Divers Alert Network (DAN) is a membership association of individuals and organizations sharing a common interest in diving safety. DAN operates a 24 hour national hotline (919) 684-8111 to provide advice on early treatment, evacuation and hyperbaric treatment of diving related injuries. Additionally, DAN provides diving safety information to members to help *prevent* accidents. Dive store or dive club membership is $100 and corporate membership is $250. Posters and brochures for dive stores, clubs, boats and emergency rooms are free. The DAN manual is available separately for $4. DAN has helped over 1,000 injured divers and answered over 5,000 non-emergency calls since its inception in September of 1980. Donations are tax deductible as DAN is a legal non-profit public service organization.

For more information contact the Divers Alert Network, P.O. Box 3823, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC 27710.

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Ski Houston/Houston Scuba Academy is moving to 17611 Kuykendahl between Louetta Rd. and FM 1960.

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Houston Scuba Academy, occupying the same building as Ski Houston, teaches scuba diving. A pool is presently under construction at the facility. Trips to the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and Florida are available for certified divers.

For information, contact: Ski Houston/Houston Scuba Academy, 17611 Kuykendahl, Spring, Texas 77379; (713) 320-0001.

NAUI COLLEGE EXTENSION COURSES

NAUI College has added new dates and locations to its off-site instructor training course extension schedule. Sites in the U.S., Caribbean and Europe have been included. For further information contact NAUI College, 27402 Camino Capistrano, Suite 103, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677; (714) 582-0186.

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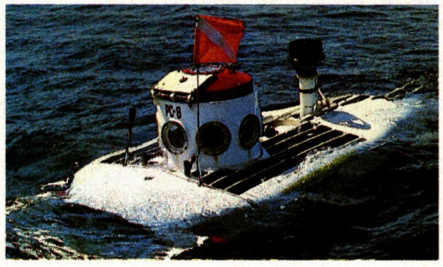
Anyone Can Do It

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY COURTNEY PLATT

We descended to the edge of the Cayman wall with a small group of underwater photographers. After completing their 100 feet for 20 minute dive, they waved goodbye. We continued our dive, however—to 800 feet for one hour and 15 minutes.

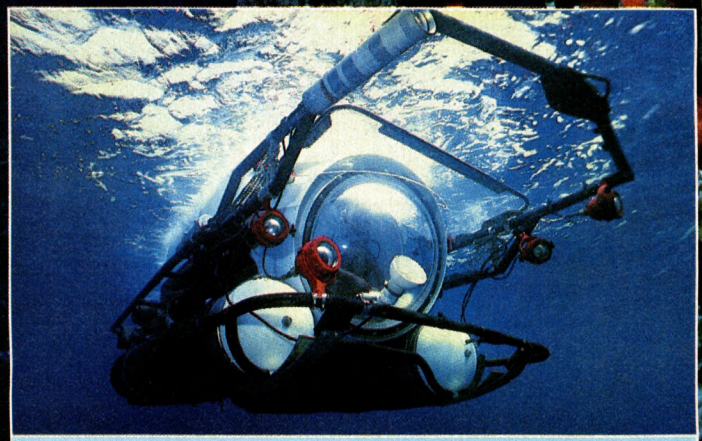
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Have you ever wished you could ride in a deep diving submersible down the face of a sheer underwater coral cliff? I know it sounds like a fairy tale but as incredible as it may seem, this opportunity now awaits you in the crystal clear waters of Grand Cayman. A very unique company called Research Submersibles Limited (RSL), which owns six of the approximately 30 presently operable submersibles in the world, is now operating in Grand Cayman, BWI. The company has submarines in three locations: Hawaii, Turks and Caicos and now Grand Cayman. The owners/pilots of the submersibles have an impressive background of experience, and professionalism is the order of the day. RSL is presently running submersible dives for the public in both the Turks and Grand Cayman. Until now these have been reserved for research institutions and the oil industry owing to the prohibitive cost of purchasing, operating and maintaining the equipment.



THE SUB

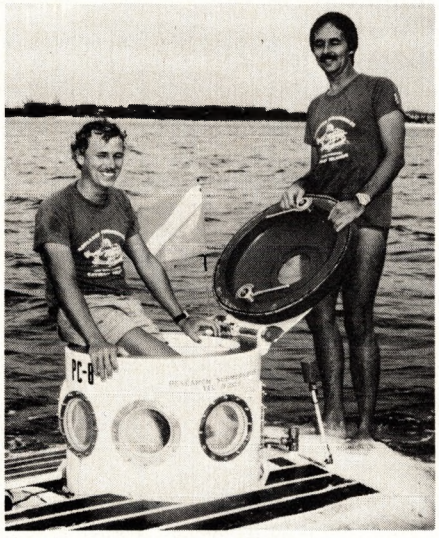
The submersible in use in Grand Cayman is PC-8; a 20 foot long, 5.5 ton observation/one atmosphere craft with an



Top: The PC-8 descends on the wall, passing a red rope sponge at 110 feet. Floodlights illuminate the colorful marine life on the vertical face. Above: PC-8 surfaces after a dive to 800 feet.

800 foot working depth capability. It was built by Perry Oceanographics. "One atmosphere submersible" means the passengers experience no change in pressure, allowing dives to as deep as 800 feet without mixed gases or decompression. PC-8 accommodates two observers in addition to the pilot. The observers sit on a bench looking through the 36 inch hemispherical front viewport. From the dome window you watch in fascination as the pilot skillfully maneuvers the vehicle into the most advantageous positions, using powerful flood lights to restore full color to the subjects of interest. PC-8 is armed with five 500 watt lights, which do an excellent job of illuminating the scenery. Although even at 800 feet there is still a surprising amount of ambient light in Cayman's clear waters, the flood lights reveal spectacular colors and allow photography using high speed film (ASA 400 suggested). Owing to the curvature of the front viewport, "normal" lenses are recommended for photography—telephoto lenses may not focus. In addition to the

Below: RSL president Phillip Janca (holding hatch) and sub pilot Stuart Mailer.



photos/Geri Murphy

front port, there are nine eight inch ports in the conning tower through which the pilot may invite you to see a spectacular view of the wall.

A diving day for PC-8 and her crew begins at 7:30 am when the sub is towed into position above the edge of the wall. At 9:00 am the observation crew is transported from the Lobster Pot dock in Georgetown Harbour via a 15 foot inflatable to PC-8. During the pre-dive briefing you are shown how to operate the emergency contingency systems. Your dive will last approximately one and one-quarter hours. PC-8 may make a total of three or four dives per day. Every fourth day PC-8 is removed from the water for battery charging and maintenance. She dives when conditions allow—in Grand Cayman that's about 340 days per year.

(Continued on Page 124)

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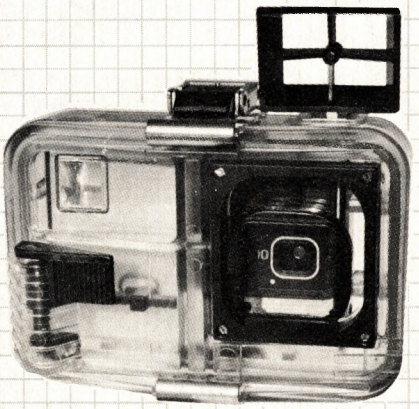


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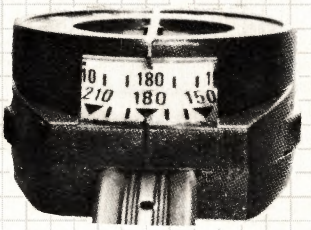
Disc Underwater Photography is an easy to follow "How To" book covering all aspects of using disc cameras and the Ikelite Disc-Case underwater.

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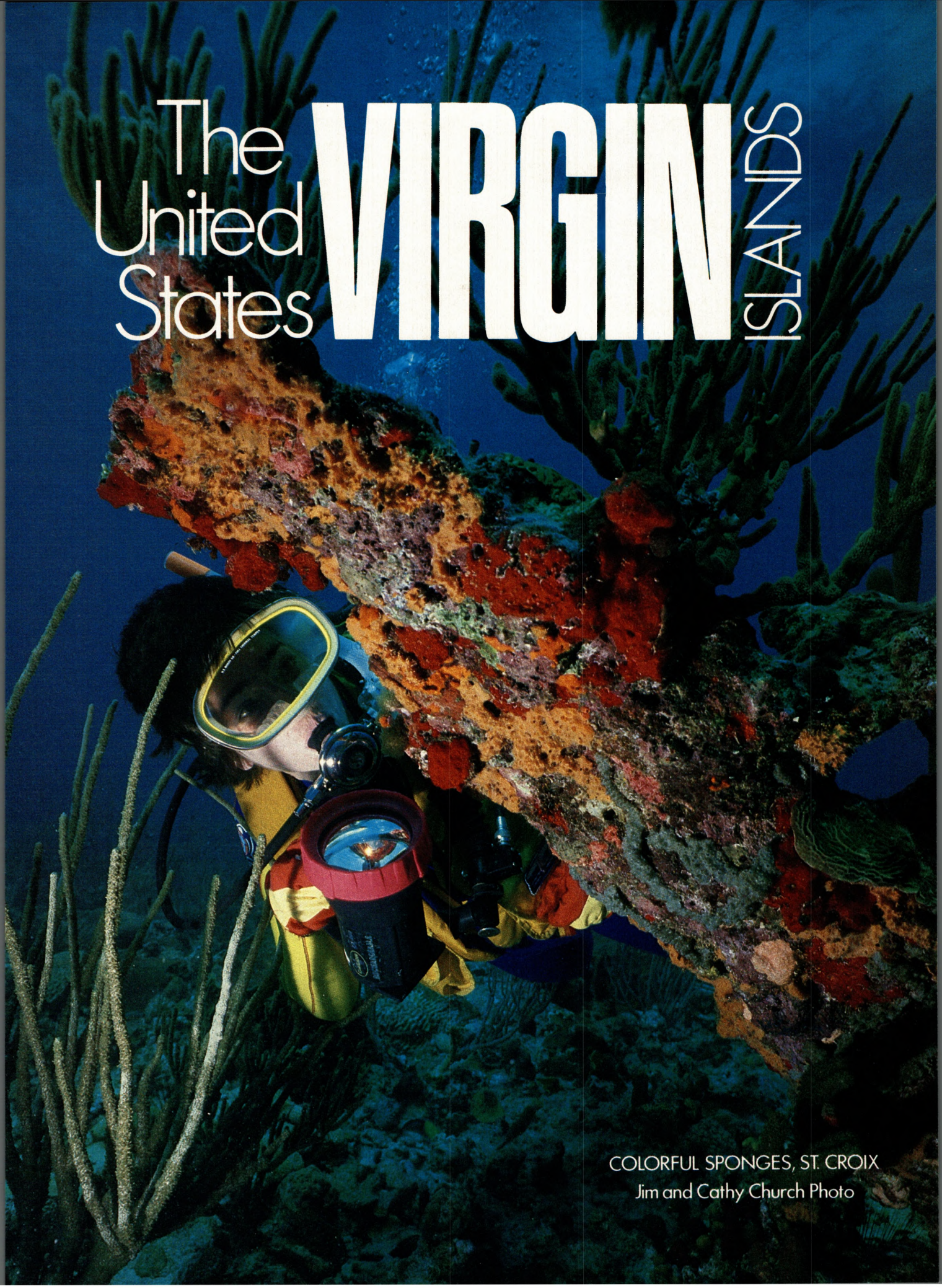
The Pro-S is the fastest and most accurate reading of the deluxe diving compasses. This design provides instant direct reading of a course on the side or on the top without aligning any bezels or marks. Then simply rotate the knurled ring to set the Desired Course Indicator in both the side and top window for course comparison. This is the finest design in a side-reading compass showing instantly if it is level and if the course is correct. Mounts on the wrist or Pennform Console.

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The United States VIRGIN ISLANDS

COLORFUL SPONGES, ST. CROIX
Jim and Cathy Church Photo

UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

Wall To Wreck Diving Adventure





The U.S. Virgin Islands are a vacation paradise for the entire family. Top: Cathy Church glides over a huge elkhorn coral formation at Frenchcap Cay. Above: Sunfish sailors at Caneel Bay. Left: The U.S. Virgin Islands are in the eastern Caribbean, where it meets the Atlantic Ocean.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM AND CATHY CHURCH

We had just passed the end of the sandy crevice when Jim looked down. He had been checking his camera settings when suddenly he noticed there was nothing under him. His stomach tightened and his heart beat faster as he peered below him. Jim—who isn't too fond of heights—was looking down a vertical wall into hundreds of feet of water. His twinge of acrophobia was overcome by an almost hypnotic feeling of tranquility. He was enjoying the beauty of a wall dive in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Name your kind of diving—walls that plunge down for hundreds of feet, photogenic shipwrecks, shallow reefs covered with marine life or a safe U/W snorkeling trail for the entire family—and one of the U.S. Virgin Islands will have it.

In addition to superb diving, the USVI offer a vacation paradise for the entire family: The weather is warm and mild; the beaches are magnificent; fishing, golf, horseback riding, sailing, tennis and many other activities are available; accommodations vary from beach campsites to exclusive resorts; and imports from all over the world await the shopper.

Getting to the USVI is easy. The three main islands are about 1,500 miles southwest of New York, 1,000 miles southeast of Miami and 70 miles east of San Juan, Puerto Rico. Eastern Airlines, for example, has flights to St. Thomas from Miami that also continue to St. Croix. Several airlines have flights to San Juan. From there you take a 25 minute commuter flight to St. Thomas or a 45 minute flight to St. Croix. Although flying through San Juan may be less expensive, the small commuter airlines are less convenient and your baggage may end up on a later flight.

Although U.S. citizens don't need passports to visit this U.S. territory, many USVI dive operators dive in BVI (British Virgin Islands) waters. Therefore, bring your passport or proof of citizenship as it is required by the BVI immigration authorities even if you don't go ashore.

Travel among the islands is easy and

inexpensive. Large, comfortable water ferries connect St. Thomas with St. John and the BVI. While the ferry ride to St. John is pleasant and restful, Cathy loves flying on the Goose (the V.I. Seaplane Shuttle). The roar of the engines, the spray and the shudder of the hull during take off and landing gets her heart going. These twin-engine seaplanes connect St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix and Tortola in the BVI. Some new flights connect San Juan Airport to the harbors of St. Thomas and Christiansted, St. Croix.

The main vacation season is from mid-December to mid-April. Prices for accommodations are lower during the summer, but some businesses are closed and some services may be curtailed in the fall. Diving is available all year, although waters tend to be calmest in the summer. Visibility ranges from about 50 to 100 feet or more. Water temperatures vary from about 84°F in summer and 76°F in winter. Air temperatures average about 82°F in summer and 77°F in winter and the humidity can be high.

The dive operations we visited offer introductory resort and certified instruction and dives for both beginning and advanced divers. Certified divers must show their C-card or logbook. Tanks, backpacks and weights are provided. Additional dive gear is usually available on a rental basis. Some operations are at seaside resorts, others pick you up at your hotel and take you back after the dive. Many can also arrange day sail trips or crewed or bareboat charters. Services can vary with time and season, however, so write ahead of time for information.

The duty free shopping is fantastic! U.S. citizens can take $800 of duty free goods back to the U.S. mainland. This is twice the normal limit. There is no age limit—a family of four can take back $3,200 duty free. You can also mail up to $100 in duty free gifts each day. If you're over 21, you can include five-fifths of liquor as part of your duty free allowance.

There are no big surprises. The electricity is standard 110 volt and the dollar is the currency of the USVI. Major credit cards and traveler's checks are generally accepted, but a few small hotels and restaurants won't accept credit cards.

ST. THOMAS

The crack of a pistol shot alerted the crew. From high on the hillside, the lookout had spotted the four-masted merchant vessel. The sleek pirate ship weighed anchor and the chase began. Today, the fate of the long-forgotten merchant ship is history. Tourists snap pictures from scenic vistas where pirate lookouts stood watch and festive cruise ships anchor where pirates once plundered. Once a notorious haven for pirates, the capital city of Charlotte Amalie is now an exciting tourist destination.

Charlotte Amalie (prounounced Charlotte A-mal'-ya), named for an early queen of Denmark, is a shopper's paradise. Historic 18th century red brick warehouses now house more than 100 shops and boutiques.

With a rented car, available from companies such as Avis, you can tour the island. Prices are lower in the summer.

Dining in St. Thomas has become one of our favorite pastimes. At the Bolongo Bay Beach and Tennis Club, you can enjoy dinner and the melodic sounds of the sea lapping gently on the beach and the rustling of palm leaves in the light evening breeze. At Bluebeard's Terrace, a historic pirate stronghold, you can overlook the lights of Charlotte Amalie and the harbor dotted with the lights of countless boats. At Harbourfront restaurant, you can view U/W creatures in large aquariums near your table. Many restaurants and night clubs feature live entertainment. Frenchman's Reef has a lively disco. Others feature calypso and reggae singers, steel bands and limbo dances—all adding to the festive atmosphere.

ST. THOMAS DIVE OPERATORS

BOLONGO BAY BEACH AND TENNIS CLUB, a first-class resort and full-service dive resort, is home for the St. Thomas Diving Club and the 68 foot motor vessel, *Mohawk II*. Owned and operated by Joyce and Dick Doumeng, Bolongo Bay has a pleasant location along the sandy sheltered beach. Resident manager, Debbie Danekas, and her friendly staff make you feel welcome and you soon become involved in daily activities. You can take the complimentary scuba lesson in the pool; join the snorkel booze hunt; enjoy the coconut tasting; compete in the limbo contest; or just sun by the pool.

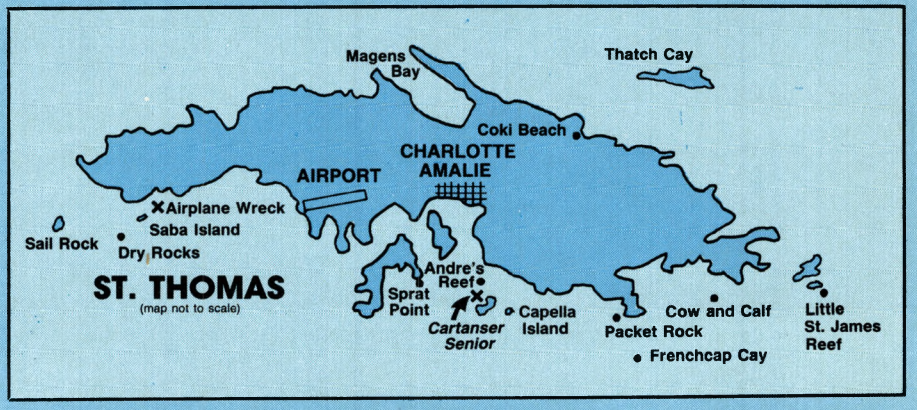
The resort has been completely renovated and expanded from 36 to 77 rooms, so Bolongo can now handle the needs of larger dive groups as well as individuals. A 75 seat conference room, with A/V aids, is being finished at this writing. All the guest rooms have new furniture, plus cable TV, phones and kitchenettes. The three-level SeaShell Restaurant is shaded by tropical palms and decorated with flowering hibiscus. The lower level is close to the live entertainment and dance floor, the middle level overlooks the pool and the upper level is among the rustling palms. The sunken bar adjoins the pool and outdoor patio. A second open-air, beachside restaurant, Coconuts, is open for lunch and dinner.

VILLA OLGA (the former home of the St. Thomas Diving Club) has eight hillside rooms overlooking the pool, ocean, Hassel Island and St. Thomas Harbor. The St. Thomas Diving Club provides free transportation to Villa Olga and the dive shop and boats at Bolongo Bay. Breakfast and lunch are served at Fernando's Retreat, on the shaded Villa Olga porch. Dinner is served at one of the island's leading restaurants, Villa Olga's Chart House. Villa Olga offers economy accommodations for divers who don't desire a beachfront location.

ST. THOMAS DIVING CLUB is now based solely at Bolongo Bay Beach & Tennis Club Hotel. Pam Balash and Andre Webber, operations managers, have worked hard at consolidating and streamlining STDC and are excited about starting the new year. They offer a two tank morning dive, a one tank afternoon dive and a weekly night dive. The boats, *Diver I* and *Diver II*, both 25 foot Deltas, leave from the Bolongo Bay dock, just a short walk from the dive shop and your room. Destinations include the *Cartanser Sr.*, Andre's Reef, Cow and Calf, and Back Yard. Captain Andre Webber has been with STDC for six years. He knows the sites and will show you many critters.

STDC's emphasis is diver tours and diver training. A PADI Five Star Instructor Development Center, it offers everything from free beginner pool lessons to the full range of PADI courses.

Mohawk II is a 68 foot, beautiful, liveaboard dive boat. It can accommodate 16 guests on three day, two night mini cruises, or full week charters around the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. *Mohawk II* also makes a weekly trip to the *Rhone*, in the BVI. Flagship of the STDC fleet, and based at Bolongo Bay, *Mohawk II* has eight air-conditioned staterooms for





Photograph by Jim and Cathy Church

"Wrecks, caves, pinnacles, walls, colorful reefs, fish, and even seahorses– the U.S. Virgin Islands have it all."

Jim and Cathy Church

"The Virgin Islands have a fantastic variety of excellent dive sites. And after the diving, the scenic views and beaches are magnificent, the historical sights are fascinating, the shopping opportunities are delightful.

"At night, the variety of restaurants and clubs will satisfy every taste and mood. And if you still have the energy to party, there's live entertainment and dancing from steel bands and limbo to electric guitars and disco."

St. Croix
St. John
St. Thomas **United States Virgin Islands**

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VIRGIN ISLANDS

guests, a large galley and comfortable dining area, and a spacious upper deck for sunning. It has a compressor, storage bank, tanks and individual gear lockers for divers. The service-minded crew, large dive deck and stern platform make entering and leaving the water easy. Write for details about group charters.

CHRIS SAWYER'S DIVING CENTER'S goal is to provide high-quality, personalized diving service for individuals and small groups. "If you aren't satisfied with the service you receive in my shop and on my dives, you get your money back," is Sawyer's personal guarantee! Near the Compass Point Marina dock, Chris Sawyer specializes in taking small groups diving on his comfortable 42 foot, custom dive boat, *Fool's Gold*. He dives 22 sites, including Frenchcap, *Cartanser Sr.*, and (in the BVI) the RMS *Rhone*. Night dives from *Fool's Gold* are a new specialty. The boat leaves in late afternoon. You enjoy snacks and the sunset as you listen to the dive brief.

Chris' newly expanded and redecorated shop has a full line of rental scuba gear and U/W cameras. Providing up-to-date, well-maintained dive equipment is a service he is especially proud of. You have a choice of accommodations from small, inexpensive cottages to modern, luxury condominiums. Chris will recommend nearby accommodations upon request and will provide free, on-time, round trip pickup service.

"Nine out of ten people who dive with us once, dive with us again," Russ Coffin of AQUA ACTION, INC. said with pride. He and manager Tim Hall work hard to maintain a style of personal contact. He is conveniently at the water's edge, at Secret Harbor Beach Hotel, where he has a hotel/dive package. You can shore dive off the beach, or boat dive from the 27 foot *Nina* and 38 foot *Jolly Roger*. Instruction is given on a large, covered beachside porch and in the shallow water a few yards away. Russ is an excellent underwater photographer, so U/W photography is a natural shop specialty. Aqua Action dives more than 30 sites and always tries to make new sites available to their repeat divers.

"Most of my customers have been with me before," Dave Fredebaugh of CARIBBEAN DIVERS told us. He specializes in personalized service—we found diving with Dave is like diving with family. We particularly enjoyed his easy pace underwater. His shop—which stocks Sea & Sea U/W cameras and strobes and basic dive gear—is near the ferry dock at Red Hook. His 21 foot Bertram is docked at the marina just across the street. Because of his location at the east end of St. Thomas, Dave, who has been diving the area for more than 17 years, can usually find a lee dive site. He can take up to six divers on his 21 foot Bertram, to the northern or southern sites of either St. Thomas or St. John. The direction depends on weather conditions.

In Joe Vogel's words, "If someone wants me to hold their hand and take them diving, I'll gladly do it." Owner of JOE VOGEL DIVING CO., his sites include the Airplane Wreck, Fortuna and Coki Reefs, and he can often furnish transportation with his van. Debby Powers-Vogel offers an U/W portrait service for divers who wish professional quality photos of their dive with Joe and provides U/W camera rentals. A comfortable living room in their home-based operation is used for a classroom and a 20 percent discount is offered on snorkeling and scuba gear purchased. Joe has been diving in St. Thomas for 26 years, but his enthusiasm hasn't waned.

SEA ADVENTURES, the dive operation based at FRENCHMAN'S REEF HOTEL, by the shore of St. Thomas Harbor, offers boat trips aboard its 26 foot Pacemakers, *Thunder* and *Lighting*, twice daily, seven days a week. Dive equipment and refreshments are provided and rental U/W cameras are available. At this writing, owner Janet Mandown is awaiting delivery of a new 40 foot, custom dive boat, *Siren*. Sea Adventures is NAUI, PADI and SSI affiliated and offers open water checkouts. It has a hotel package and tour desks at Frenchman's Reef and WINDWARD PASSAGE HOTEL. This latter is on Waterfront Highway, within easy walking distance of Charlotte Amalie's shopping district. Sea Adventures provides a ferry service between Windward Passage and the dive shop for its divers. In addition to diving, Sea Adventures can furnish sailing/snorkeling trips, power boat charters, deepsea fishing, tours to St. John and Tortola, BVI and Think Left Auto Rentals.

UNDERWATER SAFARIS (of St. Thomas), managed by Lachlan and Susie MacTavish, is at the YACHT HAVEN HOTEL AND MARINA dock. The shop has an abundant inventory of beachwear, snorkeling and scuba gear, fishing gear and books. Two boats—a 25 foot powerboat and 41 foot sailboat—are available for daily boat trips to the *Cartanser Sr.*, Cow and Calf and other sites. Their specialty is a full-day sail and dive trip to Little Buck Island (to the *Cartanser*), which includes lunch and drinks. They have a dive package with Yacht Haven Hotel and can pick up divers at other hotels.

WATERSPORTS CENTER has a dive package with SAPPHIRE BEACH RESORT. This latter features a large, palm-fringed beach; excellent dining at the Sapphire Beach Restaurant; a complete marina; tennis, basketball and racquetball courts; and a freshwater pool. The Watersports Center has a small shop and its three boats are at the resort marina.

ST. THOMAS DIVE OPERATORS

Aqua Action, Inc.
P.O. Box 12138
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-3275

Aquanautics Watersports
P.O. Box 4293
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 776-0382

Caribbean Charter Co.
American Yacht Harbor, Red Hook
St. Thomas, USVI 00802
(809) 775-6835

Caribbean Divers
Red Hook
St. Thomas, USVI 00802
(809) 775-6384

Chris Sawyer Diving Center
41-6-1 Estate Frydenhoj
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-7320

Joe Vogel Diving Company
P.O. Box 7322
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-7610

Sea Adventures
P.O. Box 9531
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 774-9652

St. Thomas Diving Club
(*Mohawk II*)
P.O. Box 7337
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-1800

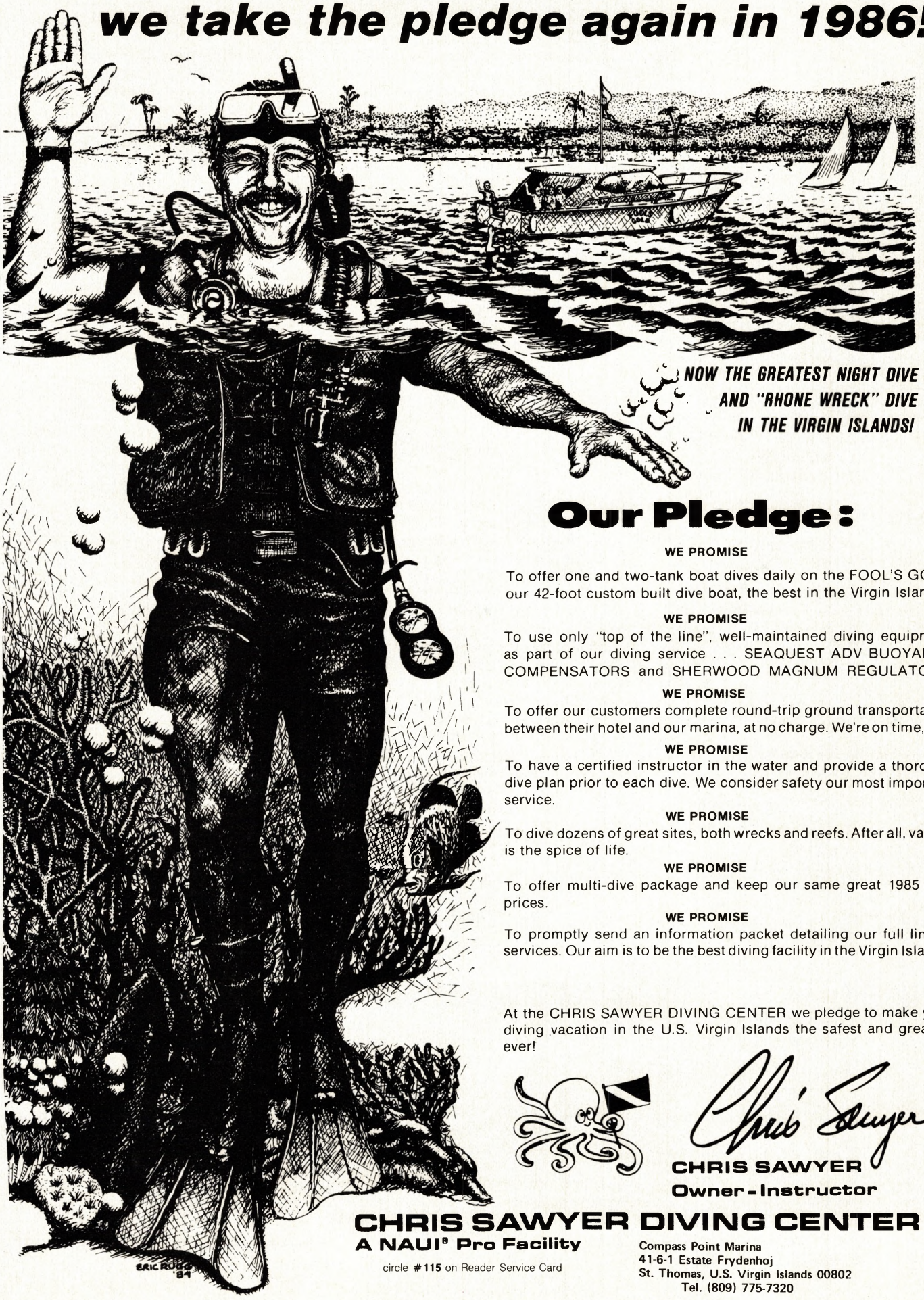
Underwater Safaris of St. Thomas
P.O. Box 8469
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 774-1350

Virgin Island Diving Schools/Supplies, Inc.
P.O. Box 9707
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 774-8687/774-7368

Watersports Center
P.O. Box 2432
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-6755

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WE PROMISE

To offer our customers complete round-trip ground transportation between their hotel and our marina, at no charge. We're on time, too!

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To have a certified instructor in the water and provide a thorough dive plan prior to each dive. We consider safety our most important service.

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To dive dozens of great sites, both wrecks and reefs. After all, variety is the spice of life.

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To offer multi-dive package and keep our same great 1985 dive prices.

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To promptly send an information packet detailing our full line of services. Our aim is to be the best diving facility in the Virgin Islands.

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CHRIS SAWYER
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VIRGIN ISLANDS

Manager Fred Williams has been diving in the Virgin Islands for 23 years and knows many excellent sites. The 42 foot *Sea Trek*, 32 foot *Stormy Petrel* and 26 foot *Argonaut* carry up to six divers each. Different groups can go to different sites, depending on their experience and destination preference. Dive sites include Little St. James, Congo Cay and Thatch Tunnels. There is car or truck pickup for divers from the east end of St. Thomas.

WYNDHAM VIRGIN GRAND WATERSPORTS CENTER is on the sandy beach of the almost completed 295 room WYNDHAM VIRGIN GRAND HOTEL. The finished sections are beautiful, with marble floors and an elegant architectural style that fits the island atmosphere. Some luxury rooms even feature hot tubs. The hotel offers many services, including a fitness center for sauna and massage, satellite color television, pool and tennis. Four room rates are available, from minimum to deluxe.

Watersports Center owner/managers, George and Nan Alexander, cater to small groups of divers. Their three boats—the 34 foot *Grand Nan* for up to six divers, the 20 foot *Grand Nan II* for up to four divers and the 29 foot *Virgin Passage* for up to six divers—can take small groups to a variety of sites. The larger 150 foot *Seawolf* is used for day-long dive trips as well as dinner cruises. The large shop houses a new compressor, dive gear sales and rentals, and a beach boutique. Five crewed sailboats, from 44 to 60 feet, are available for daily sailing.

AQUANAUTICS WATERSPORTS has a new 1,000 square foot dive shop at Sub Base, near the St. Thomas airport. In past years, manager Jerry Henderson concentrated on using his comfortable, 40 foot Striker, *Sea Demon*, for groups of up to six divers. Now, Aquanautics has three more boats, running from both Sub Base and the east end of the island. There is a 20 foot Seacraft for two to four divers as well as 26 and 30 foot custom dive boats and the *Sea Demon*, for up to six divers each. From the east end, Aquanautics dives Frenchcap, Thatch Tunnels and the General Rogers wreck. From Sub Base, Sail Rock, Savannah and Saba are easily reached. The *Sea Demon* can also be chartered for overnight trips to Anegada or Tobago, as well as for fishing or snorkeling trips.

Aquanautics has a package with the VIRGIN ISLAND HOTEL. Although on a hillside, the hotel has a beach at Brewer's Bay, where Aquanautics has a complete watersports concession. They offer resort courses, with the first dive off the beach, and certification to assistant instructor.

CHARTERING A YACHT

Picture yourself waking to the gentle slapping of the water against the hull. You rise for a sumptuous breakfast or perhaps an early dive. Have the captain move to a new site only when you're ready. Or perhaps just sail among these perfect islands. If you want to have it your way, then you should consider chartering a yacht. Depending on your experience, you can charter a sailing yacht with or without a crew. If you don't mind helping with the sails and anchoring, you might just hire a qualified captain or charter a motor vessel.

Several yacht charter brokers are based in St. Thomas. They specialize in finding boats that fit your needs. If you don't have any particular boat in mind, yacht charter brokers are invaluable. They know what boats and crews are available and what waters the boats operate in. They usually have provisioning packages—you choose from several menu plans, the food is provided and packaged in proper proportions.

Vessels (and prices) vary from spartan to luxurious. When comparing the price of yacht charters to resorts, remember that the yacht price is often all-inclusive. Accommodations, food, diving and beverages are included; taxis, rental cars and other costs may often be avoided.

Sailing and motor yachts are usually owner-operated, 50 to 80 foot vessels that sleep up to six or eight guests and a crew of up to four. A few have compressors aboard and many can furnish certified divemasters or instructors. Make your needs clear when you contact the broker. If diving is important, specify a crewed yacht with an experienced divemaster. If you are a beginning diver or need instruction, specify that you need a certified scuba instructor. Inquire about the divemaster's experience in the areas you wish to dive.

V.I. SCUBA/SAIL CHARTERS specializes exclusively in sailing charters for scuba divers. Owner Chris Moore, a scuba diver, knows the area and works closely with the boat captains. The boats vary in length from 40 to 80 feet and sleep two to 12 guests. All the captains have a minimum rating of divemaster. The charters range from budget to luxury, and from bareboat to fully crewed. If you want to plan your own itinerary, feast on gourmet meals or enjoy the abundant deck space of a multi-hulled vessel, just let Chris know.

VIRGIN ISLANDS WATER SAFARIS (a division of Regency International Yacht Charters), managed by diver Kathy Wagner, has more than 300 crewed yachts and 400 bareboats in its listings. As examples, *My Way*, a 60 foot trimaran, has two compressors, plenty of storage

ST. THOMAS RESORTS AND HOTELS (with dive packages)

Bolongo Bay Beach & Tennis Club
P.O. Box 7337
St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 775-1800

Frenchman's Reef Beach Resort
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St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 774-8500

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Secret Harbor Beach Hotel
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(809) 775-1010

The Anchorage
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(809) 775-4844

Villa Olga
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St. Thomas, USVI 00801
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Windward Passage Hotel
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Wyndham Virgin Grand Beach Hotel
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Canada: (800) 631-4200

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St. Thomas, USVI 00801
(809) 776-2860; (800) 524-2005

Virgin Island Water Safaris
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per person double occupancy

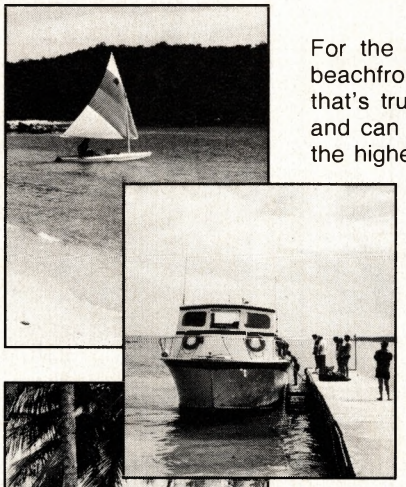
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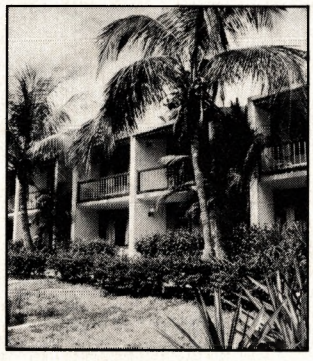
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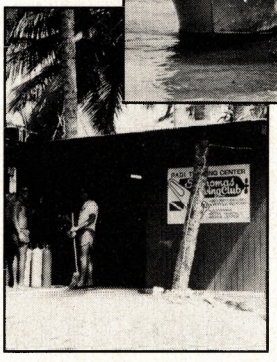
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For the past 8 years, Bolongo has been known as the beachfront resort that's always full. And we're proud to say that's true! So, we've doubled our size (added 45 rooms) and can now invite you to see why we've consistently run the highest occupancy in the Caribbean. In addition to the new rooms, we've totally refurbished the "old" rooms, added a second restaurant by our 4 tennis courts, built a new dive center and added a meeting room for groups. To insure our continued success, we still include Continental breakfast in our room rate, free Sunfish sailing, use of snorkel gear, an all day sail to St. John, use of tennis courts, plenty of Caribbean sun and one of the friendliest staffs you'll ever encounter. Windsurfing and Aquabiking are also available at our 1000′ beach. As for diving, one of our 4 dive boats (ranging in size from 25′-68′) departs from our very own dock. A total vacation with diving, too!

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A Division of St. Thomas Beach Resorts, Inc.
P.O. Box 7337, ST. THOMAS, V.I. 00801

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL 800-524-4746

ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Before April 15th $992.50
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Prices Include:
Bolongo Portion
- Continental Breakfast
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8 Days & 7 Nights
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All year price $1,312.50

Price Includes:
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5 Days & 4 Nights Mohawk II
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8 Days & 7 Nights Mohawk II
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Individual bookings will be accepted for the above dates

- Mohawk II is available for charter only.
- All prices are based on per person double occupancy with 16 passengers

Mohawk II	Departures	Arrivals
3 nights	Thursday 11 AM	Sunday 11 AM
4 nights	Thursday 11 AM	Monday 11 AM
7 nights	Sunday 3 PM	Sunday 11 AM

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AND NOW, MOHAWK TOO!







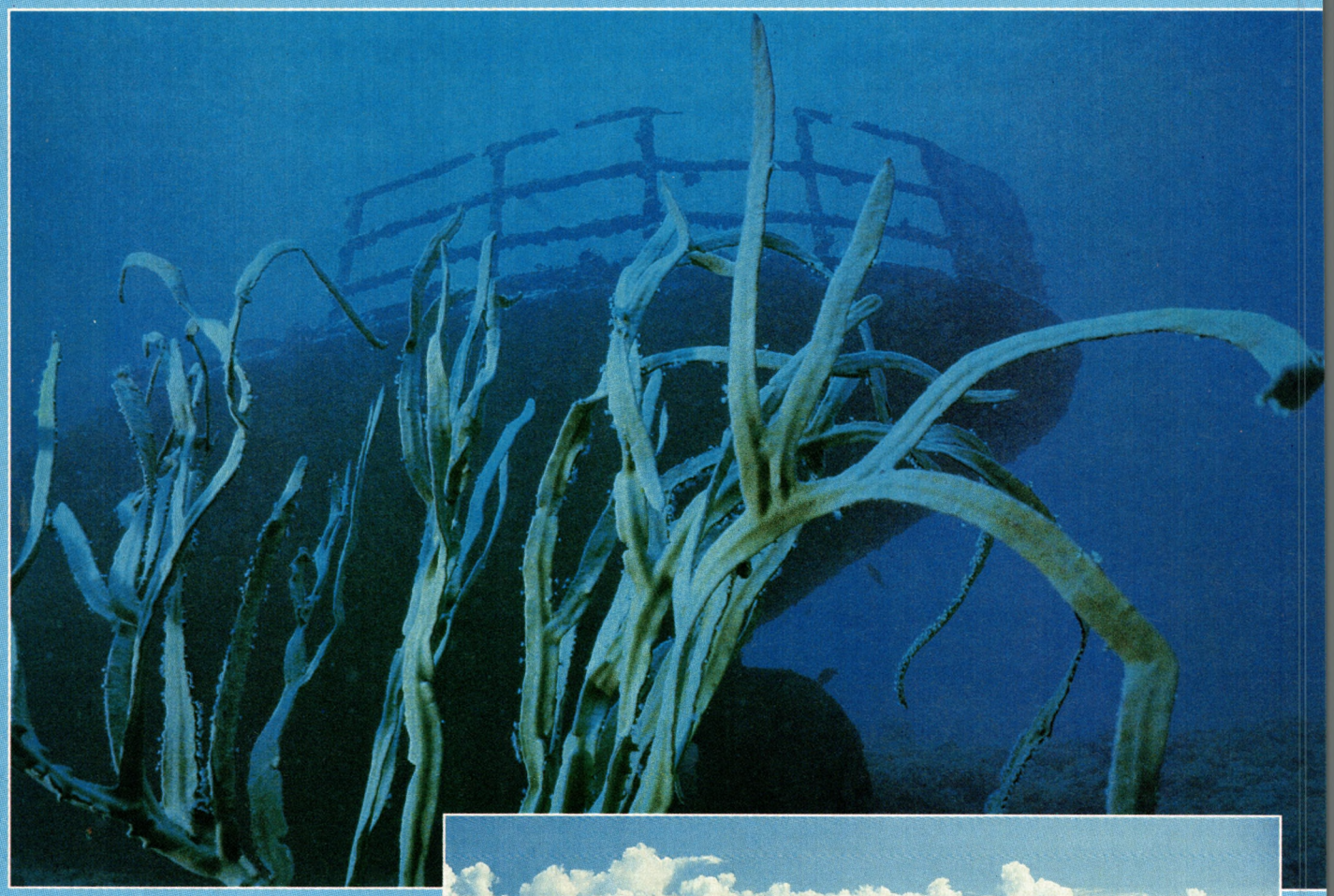
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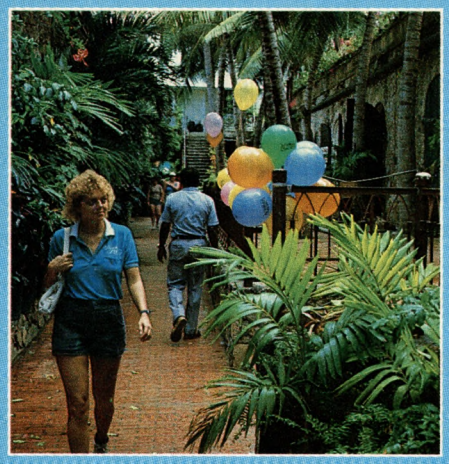
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For information, call toll free 800-524-4746

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Top: The stern of the *Cartanser Sr.* off Little Buck Island, St. Thomas. Above left: St. Thomas street scene. Above right: Fabulous view of Charlotte Amalie Harbor, St. Thomas. Below left: The V.I. Seaplane Shuttle ("Goose") connects St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John, Tortola in the BVI and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Below right: Eastern Airlines flies into St. Thomas and St. Croix.





space and five queen-size beds for six to ten guests. If you prefer a motor vessel, the 61 foot *Ocean Pearl II* has two large bedrooms, three bathrooms, three wet bars and a large dive platform—all for just four guests!

Conveniently located dockside at the Yacht Haven Marina, V.I. Water Safaris can attend to your last-minute needs. They require any yacht offering diving to provide certified divemasters and/or instructors and the necessary insurance. Virgin Islands Water Safaris provides a dive site chart and works closely with Underwater Safaris (Tortola, BVI) if you prefer to rendezvous with a dive boat. To monitor the performances of the yachts they represent, they ask you to fill in a performance questionnaire at the end of your charter.

EASY ADVENTURES, managed by Jim and Mary Kellogg, is based at THE ANCHORAGE BEACH VILLAS. They can book you aboard a variety of diving vessels and crewed or bareboat yachts including the *Tropic Bird*, the 60 foot *Ovation* and 55 foot *Tri-World*. They are proud of the personalized charter broker service and assistance they offer.

ST. THOMAS DIVE SITES

Airplane Wreck, a great combination wreck/reef dive just off Fortuna Beach, is one of Joe Vogel's favorite shore dives. The four engine Constellation crashed into the sea in 1981 and now lies in 40 feet of water, about 150 yards off the beach. The fuselage is mostly intact and houses many small critters.

Andre's Reef is at the northwest tip of Little Buck Island (not to be confused with Buck Island at St. Croix). The reef slopes from about 40 to 80 feet down to a flat sand bottom where you will see conch, large rays and scattered wreckage that hosts eels, octopus and fish. The site is large enough for 20 divers.

Capella Island, also close to Little Buck, has a sloping reef of lettuce corals from about 40 to 70 feet. We saw lobster, eels, pufferfish and an old anchor.

Cartanser Sr. is a 190 foot, steel-hulled freighter deliberately sunk in the protected cove of Little Buck Island to form a dive site. Numerous underwater photographers have won awards with pictures taken in her engine room and through her portholes.

Coki Beach is one of St. Thomas' most popular shore dives. The reef—loaded with close-up critters—slopes at 45 degrees to a sandy bottom at 50 feet.

Dive at Cinnamon Bay on St. John.

The campground that thinks it's a resort.

- Superb location, right on the beach.
- Offers the total St. John vacation experience: dive, windsurf, sail, hike in the Virgin Islands National Park.
- Outdoor, open-air restaurant *and* complete grocery supplies.
- For diving: 42′ Grand Banks boat with onboard compressor, PADI-certified Dive Master, introductory and open water certification classes, fully equipped water sports center.
- Dive Package includes: 7 days/6 nights accommodations, five days of boat diving which may include one tank, two tank and wreck dives, all necessary equipment. Just *$395* per person, double, through March 31, *$368* from April 1 through July 31, 1986.

See your travel agent or call toll-free: 800-223-7637. (New York City 212-586-4459.) Or call the Campground 809-776-6330.

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VIRGIN ISLANDS

The fish are tame because they're accustomed to being handfed.

Cow and Calf has two pinnacles (the cow and the calf) with submerged tunnels, caves and rock formations between them in 25 to 35 feet of water. The largest cave is lined with colorful sponges, banded coral shrimp and other creatures and frequently houses a sleeping nurse shark. Another cave is home to a school of copper sweepers. At night we've seen sleeping turtles in a third cave. In rough weather, you can swim through rock crevices and look up at the boiling surf.

Frenchcap Cay is a mid-ocean pinnacle about six miles south of St. Thomas. At depths of 50 to 90 feet you will see large basket sponges, barracuda, horse-eye jacks and large rays. In the shallow areas, elkhorn corals weave intricate patterns. Small caves and tunnels are lined with colorful corals and sponges. This is another of our favorite sites.

***General Rodgers* Wreck** is a steel-hulled, 150 foot former Coast Guard buoy tender that was sunk in 1976 to form an artificial reef. Resting upright in 60 to 70 feet on a sand bottom between Thatch Cay and the beach at the Wyndham Virgin Grand, her hull is home for sponges, tunicates and schools of fish. As there is sometimes a current, this is for experienced divers.

Little St. James Ledges are along the southeast side of Little St. James Island. These are undercut shallow ledges rimmed with fire corals and plumeworms. The undersides are covered with red encrusting sponges and yellow cup corals and the recesses hide red squirrelfish.

Packet Rock is where the packet ship *Warric* foundered in 1816. Divers still find bits of her cargo of china and tiles and an occasional cannon ball.

Saba Island has three different dive sites that have shallow reefs and ledges providing homes for lobster, shrimp, crabs and other close-up subjects.

Thatch Cay has three or four good sites, but the stone tunnel at the western tip is the most popular. Its walls are covered with yellow cup corals, varicolored sponges, small shrimp and crabs.

ST. JOHN

The hiking trail was refreshing. We had enjoyed lively St. Thomas, but it was time to relax on a woodland trail and wander among the historic ruins of the sugar mills. Later, we would stroll along the beach and watch the windsurfers.

ACCOMMODATIONS

CINNAMON BAY CAMPGROUND (a division of Rockresorts) is in the Virgin Islands National Park on St. John. The park, which covers about two thirds of St. John, is a wildlife and historic preserve. The campground faces almost a mile of protected, sandy beach. The basic facilities include four bathhouses, 11 bare sites, 40 cottage units and 60 large tents. Each cottage or tent accommodates up to six people and is equipped with beds (and new, thicker mattresses), gas stove, kitchen utensils, icebox and linen. Pack as if you were staying at a hotel, but bring extra beach towels.

Cinnamon Bay Campground combines the ambience and economy of camping, with many of the amenities of a regular resort. If you don't wish to cook your own food (everything is available at the commissary) Cinnamon Bay Campground runs an inexpensive food service. You can eat three delicious meals a day (at this writing) for $10. The Watersports Center is housed in a historic Danish warehouse. They offer windsurfing, day sails, diving and snorkeling.

Other accommodations include MAHO BAY CAMPGROUNDS and hotels varying from the hillside privacy of SEA BREEZE VILLAS, to the spacious countryside resort, CANEEL BAY INC. At this latter, the emphasis is on relaxation among the natural surroundings of gardens and beach. To help you get away from city life and mechanization, there are no public access roads onto the property and there are no phones or televisions in the rooms. There are three gourmet restaurants right on the property, as well as six private beaches with good snorkeling, hiking trails and other activities.

ST. JOHN CAMPGROUNDS

Cinnamon Bay Campground
P.O. Box 720, Cruz Bay
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6330; 776-6458;
(800) 223-7637

Maho Bay Camps
P.O. Box 310
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6240

ST. JOHN ACCOMMODATIONS (with dive packages)

Caneel Bay, Inc.
P.O. Box 720, Cruz Bay
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6111; (800) 223-7637

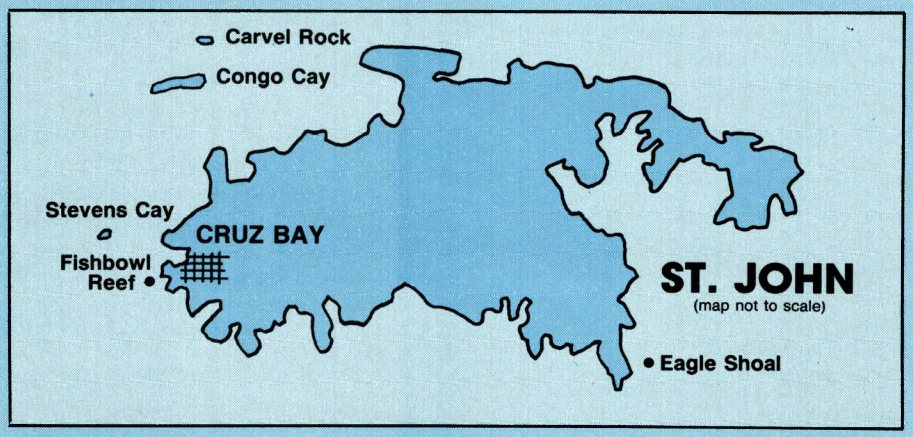
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Hurricane Hole
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6321

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Bradford, PA 16701
(814) 368-9446

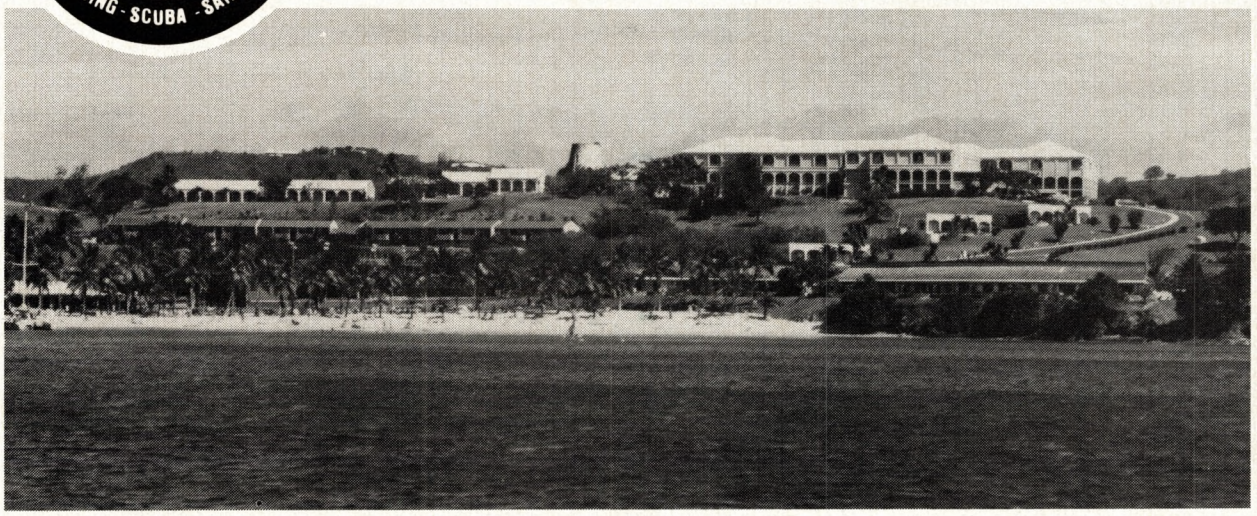
Sea Breeze Villas
P.O. Box 656, Cruz Bay
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6416

ST. JOHN DIVE OPERATORS

M/V *Cinnamon Bay*, a 42 foot Grand Banks owned and captained by Bob Conn, picks up guests at the Cinnamon Bay Campground beach. It is available for a variety of family and individual trips including snorkeling, BVI excursions, cocktail cruises and of course, scuba diving. It takes up to 12 divers, has 2 compressors and equipment is provided for the dive. Bob has spent many hours rebuilding and refinishing the teak and mahogany on this beautiful boat. It has a large open dive deck and an equally large enclosed saloon. Bob took us to a dive in Sir Francis Drake Channel and showed us the biggest trees of black cor-



DIVE WITH ST. CROIX'S MOST EXPERIENCED





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- Ten Boat Dives $225.00
- Fifteen Boat Dives $300.00

Prices are per person. Dives include tanks, packs and weights.

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- 7 nights/8 days
- Welcome Cocktails
- Breakfast daily
- Buffet Dinner
- Ten boat dives
- Sunset Cruise with Rum Punch
- Manager's Sippin' Sundown Party
- Bottle of Rum

$640.00

Price is per person. Dives include tanks, packs and weights.

For reservations see your travel agent or contact **RALPH LOCKE**
315 E. 72nd St., New York, N.Y. 10021
Phone Toll Free
1-800-223-1108
or **(212) 586-3070** in New York State

The Buccaneer
ST. CROIX, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

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VIRGIN ISLANDS

al we had ever seen. We hope no greedy diver collects these ancient colonies.

CORAL BAY WATERSPORTS has a new 36 foot Chris Craft, *Blue Runner*, that makes daily trips to both local and BVI dive sites. Box lunches or beach barbecues are included with some trips. Night diving, including the *Rhone* when the moon is full, and U/W photography with Dave D'Alberto, are also featured.

CRUZ BAY WATERSPORTS, INC. offers day sailing aboard a 36 foot sloop and separate trips for beginners and experienced divers aboard a 28 foot dive boat. They stock diving gear for sale and rental, including Sea & Sea 110 and 35mm cameras.

JIM TRAVERS CANEEL BAY DIVING has the 33 foot *Jumbi Jay* and 30 foot *Downtown Diver*. Each boat takes up to six divers, from the dock at Caneel Bay, where he has a dive package. Jim specializes in beginning divers.

ST. JOHN WATER SPORTS offers personalized dives for one to six divers and trips for larger groups can be arranged. Instruction, day and night diving, snorkeling trips and day sailing all originate at the dive store, at Mongoose Junction, Cruz Bay.

ST. JOHN DIVE OPERATORS

Cinnamon Bay Watersports Center
P.O. Box 720, Cruz Bay
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6330; (800) 223-7637

Coral Bay Watersports
P.O. Box 569
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6857

Cruz Bay Watersports
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St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6234

Jim Travers Caneel Bay Diving
P.O. Box 550
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6111

St. John Watersports, Inc.
P.O. Box 70, Cruz Bay
St. John, USVI 00830
(809) 776-6256

ST. JOHN DIVE SITES

There are certainly many more sites available to the dive operators of St. John than we could possibly describe. Below are just a few examples of the types of things you might expect.

Carval Rock, about two miles north of Cruz Bay, is a mass of boulders jutting up through the surface. It has both shallow coral gardens and deeper reef diving. You may see schools of tarpon in the shallows on both sides. Dropping down the vertical wall at the western tip, we saw purple seafans, sponges, fish and a variety of rock formations.

Congo Cay, just west of Carval Rock, is a long, narrow rock that rises abrupty from the sea bottom. At the western tip, the walls plunge vertically before sloping down to 80 feet. You will find banded coral shrimp, plumeworms and tiny blennies, and may see spadefish, eagle rays and manta rays near the bottom.

Eagle Shoal, on St. John's south side, has pinnacles, tunnels and caverns with depths from about 35 to 100 feet. Large pelagics, including amberjacks, permits and spadefish, have been seen here.

Fishbowl Reef, only a few hundred yards from Cruz Bay, is Cathy's favorite St. John dive site. She enjoys photographing the schools of grunts beneath coral ledges at depths of only 20 to 35 feet. The undersides of the ledges are covered with bright red sponges and other colorful marine life.

Steven's Cay is one of Jim's favorite sites because we found copper sweepers hiding beneath ledges in less than 25 feet of water.

ST. CROIX

The cannon roared and the gun carriage creaked as it rolled back to absorb the recoil. This was not a shot fired in anger—it was the first foreign salute for the new United States flag. The year was 1776, the place was Fort Frederik in Frederiksted, St. Croix. Today, the fort has been restored to its 1840 appearance. You can stand by the cannons that still point toward the sea.

About 40 miles south of St. Thomas, the island of St. Croix has two main towns: Christiansted and Frederiksted. Christiansted is on the northern side. The town is a maze of tree-covered walkways among small hotels, open-air bars and quaint shops crammed with merchandise. Shoppers will find batik clothing and jewelry, china, crystal and French perfumes. Several dive operations and hotels are clustered near King's Wharf, at the harbor. These include Caribbean Sea Adventures; Dive Experience; V.I. Divers, Ltd.; Club Comanche Hotel; Hotel Caravelle; King Christian Hotel, The Anchor Inn.

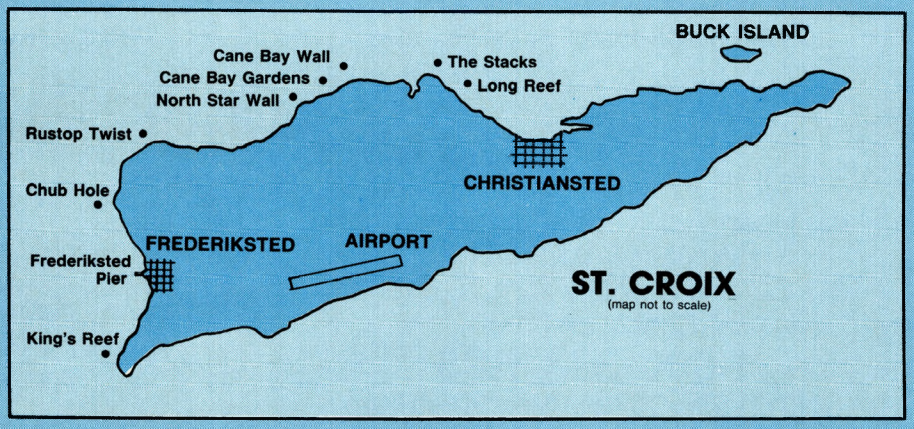
Frederiksted, on the western coast, features fascinating old Danish architecture. It is St. Croix's deep water harbor and cruise ships dock at Frederiksted Pier. While shopping isn't as varied as in Christiansted, you might be pleasantly surprised. Cruzan Divers is the only dive shop in this area and the two main hotels are the Frederiksted and Royal Dane.

Midway between Christiansted and Frederiksted, on the north coast, are Sea Shadows and a variety of other resorts and villas.

St. Croix has more fine restaurants than we can describe. You can enjoy conch with fine herbs and butter sauce, scallops poached in wine, octopus salad, Texas barbecue, fine steaks, fondue specialties and Italian pasta.

Entertainment varies from local steel bands to the Bombay Jazz Club.

The St. Croix Diving Association, part of the U/W Society of America, welcomes guests at their meetings. Club president Lee Morris, a St. Croix realtor and present director of development of the U/W Society of America, tells us they have met every third Thursday of the month for 21 years. If you have any questions about club activities, contact Lee directly at P.O. Box 513, Christiansted, St. Croix 00820, days (809) 773-3300, home (809) 773-0700.



DIVE OPERATORS AND HOTELS

CARIBBEAN SEA ADVENTURES, St. Croix's largest dive operation, is owned by Larry Angus and managed by Sterling Holbrook. CSA has several shops, including the main dive shop in the King Christian Hotel building, 100 feet from the CSA boats at King's Wharf.

CSA has five boats to meet your needs. Its newest boat, the custom 42 foot *Phoenix*, travels at 20 knots and can whisk 6 to 18 divers to Salt River in 15 minutes. The 40 foot Harris, *Deliverance*, carries 6 to 16 divers; the 30 foot Lindsay, *Scorpio*, carries 6 to 12 divers; the 36 foot Striker, *Gemini*, takes 6; and the 23 foot *Seaspray* will take 1 to 6 divers.

In addition to boat diving, CSA can provide Buck Island sail and snorkel tours, waterskiing, sailboarding and sportfishing. Certified instruction—from resort to assistant instructor—is available, usually with one day's notice. They are also planning underwater photography courses for beginners and special underwater photography dives for two or three photographers who don't want a guided tour. CSA can provide rental cameras. Write for the latest details.

CSA has dive packages with The Buccaneer Hotel, Grapetree Beach Hotel, King Christian Hotel, and Mary Ann Cram Vacation Homes and Villas. THE BUCCANEER—159 rooms set in the middle of a championship golf course and more than 240 acres of green lawns and well-trimmed shrubbery—is two miles east of Christiansted. We preferred the Doubloon Rooms at Cutlass Cove Beach because these are convenient for divers. The Beach Shack watersports center, Mermaid Restaurant and the dock from which the CSA dive boat leaves, will all be close to your room. GRAPETREE BEACH HOTEL is on the east side of St. Croix. The 86 air-conditioned oceanfront rooms and suites overlook 1,000 feet of beautiful, secluded beach. There are two restaurants that serve excellent Sunday brunches. CSA has a 16 foot dinghy for snorkelers and a 16 foot sailboat based at the beach. For scuba diving, Grapetree has a shuttle that will take you near the CSA boat at King's Wharf. The KING CHRISTIAN HOTEL building houses CSA's main shop as well as an excellent Chart House restaurant. The MARY ANN CRAM VACATION HOME AND VILLAS feature luxurious beachfront locations and all-inclusive packages with air fare, use of a car, barbecue, maid service, island tour, neighborhood party and more. When traveling with a family or group, these two to five bedroom villas become quite economical as well as luxurious.

V.I. DIVERS, LTD., in the Pan Am Pavilion and managed by Gary Little, has new owners: Kathleen and Jimmy Antoine. The Antoine's goal is to treat their guests the way they liked being treated when they were traveling divers. The service on our dive with them was excellent! They

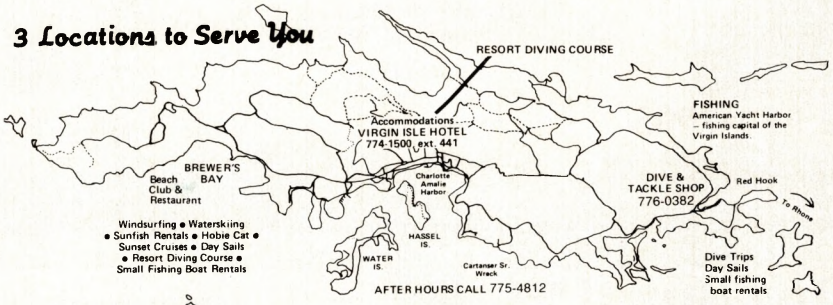
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use Captain Larry Dunn's *Maverick*, a 44 foot Lindsay, to carry up to 25 divers to Salt River, Cane Bay, Long Reef and other sites. They are planning an U/W photo portrait and video service and photo/video charters for groups. They also offer shore diving with an average swim of about 100 yards. A full line of equipment for sale and rental is available at their

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shop. Instruction is available from resort to full certification, with introductory lessons in the Hotel Caravelle pool.

V.I. Divers, Ltd. packages with HOTEL CARAVELLE, about 30 yards away. Owner/managers Sid and Amy Kalmans, are excellent hosts. Sid is a scuba instructor and as an excellent photographer, he can help you with special photo problems. Hotel Caravelle has 46 spacious, air-conditioned rooms, plus a gear storage area. A meeting room is available for clubs and groups. There are several shops in the Caravelle arcade, including a barber and beauty shop and the American and Eastern airline ticket offices. Caravelle's Binnacle Restaurant, on an open air seaside terrace, serves delicious international and local cuisine.

CRUZAN DIVERS, INC., in Frederiksted, now has a 42 foot dive boat that will carry up to 20 divers. And, for small groups up to six, they still have the 23 foot *Cruzan Diver*. They are just a couple blocks from Frederiksted Pier and manager Doug McIntyre can usually take you to a seahorse. Cruzan Divers has hotel packages with the FREDERIKSTED HOTEL and ROYAL DANE HOTEL.

DIVE EXPERIENCE, owned by Michelle Pugh, has a well stocked shop by the Club Comanche dock near King's Wharf. She offers boat dives (on the *Maverick*) for up to 20 divers and offers flexible scheduling to meet the needs of experienced divers and students. She will take you diving any day, any time. She offers resort and full certification courses. Dive Experience has packages with CLUB COMANCHE HOTEL and TAMARIND REEF BEACH HOTEL. Michelle makes hotel pickups when necessary.

At this writing Michelle is planning to open a second shop at the Salt River Marina. She can pick you up at your hotel and drive you to the boat at Salt River. The excellent diving of the North Shore, including Salt River Wall, is just a few minutes away by boat. She plans to have showers and gear storage facilities at the new site.

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ST. CROIX DIVE SITES

King's Reef has a 45 degree slope from about 40 to more than 100 feet. It is covered with corals, gorgonians and seafans. Look for large French angels, eels, lobster and elusive turtles.

Frederiksted Pier is where you go for seahorses. This 1,000 foot undersea forest of more than 600 pilings is decorated with arrowcrabs, plumeworms and sponges of all descriptions. The tiny red,

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(809) 773-3307

Sea Shadows
P.O. Box 505, Cane Bay
St. Croix, USVI 00820
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V.I. Divers, Ltd.
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yellow and orange seahorses hide in the growth on the pilings. If you want to see seahorses, be sure to call Cruzan Divers ahead of time to make sure the little critters are in.

North Star Wall is a spectacular drop-off about one mile west of Cane Bay, only about 130 yards from shore. The wall starts at about 25 feet, plunges vertically to 60 feet, then slopes down at an 80 degree angle for hundreds of feet.

Rustop Twist is a drop-off with diving depths from about 50 to 130 feet. Upwellings seem to attract pelagics such as bluerunners, jacks, kingfish, Spanish mackerel and tuna.

Salt River consists of two sites on the east and west sides of the river canyon. The east side has large cuts and canyons in a sheer wall and is loaded with sponges—long purple sponges, bright yellow sponges and large orange elephant ear sponges.

Cane Bay Gardens, one of our favorite shallow dive sites, is near the edge of Cane Bay Wall. It is virtually a garden (or more accurately a zoo) of lush, healthy corals, red finger sponges, banded coral shrimp, arrowcrabs and fish. This is an ideal second dive or an ideal first dive if you wish to stay shallow.

Cane Bay Wall is only about 175 yards from shore. The top of the wall has a series of sandy crevices, any of which will lead you to a drop-off starting at about 50 feet. It slopes steeply to 130 feet and more. A school of Atlantic spadefish swam by our group three times.

The Stacks feature a petite mini-wall that is ideal for beginning divers. Although not a true wall because it doesn't plunge down for hundreds of feet, it drops vertically from about 35 feet at the top to about 75 feet at the bottom.

Long Reef slopes gently from about 30 to 80 feet. It features large coral heads separated by sandy ravines and large basket sponges. Look for the fish, featherstars and other small critters that hide in the nooks and crannies.

BUCK ISLAND NATIONAL MONUMENT

If you wish to take family members snorkeling, take them to Buck Island. About four miles northwest of Christiansted and administrated by the National Park Service, Buck Island features a snorkeling trail with U/W markers. Several operators—many of whom give basic snorkeling instruction on the beach before taking you on the trail—offer daily half and full day trips.

CONCLUSION

The U.S. Virgin Islands offer much more than we can crowd into this article. For more information, write to the United States Virgin Islands Division of Tourism, P.O. Box 471269, Miami, FL 33125. Tell them you are a diver and specify the islands in which you are interested.

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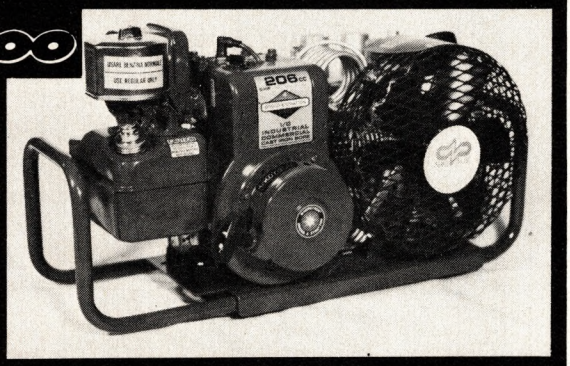
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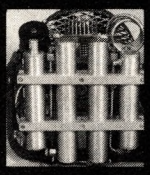
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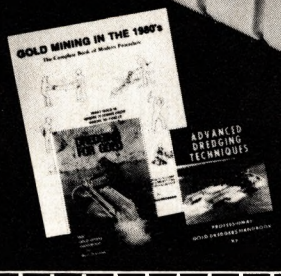
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Diving Medicine

BY ALFRED A. BOVE M.D., Ph.D.

The spring of each year brings an annual pilgrimage for most physicians interested in diving medicine, the scientific meeting of the Undersea Medical Society. It was held in early June 1985 in Long Beach, California. This year for the first time, an entire session was devoted to medical problems in sport diving. Sport divers compose the largest segment in diving. All commercial, military and scientific divers together do not add up to the numbers of sport divers.

The sport diving session started off with a discussion of a common problem, the causes and treatment of arterial air embolism. This accounts for most of the serious pressure related injuries and results in permanent brain injury like other forms of stroke.

Research on air embolism has provided new possibilities for additional medical therapy and the suggestion that we should be more liberal with our use of hyperbaric oxygen in treatment. Therapy still depends highly on recompression in a hyperbaric chamber. When diving, you should always know where the nearest treatment chamber is and the means of transportation to it. One important lesson repeated in these sessions is the need for early recompression therapy. Long delays before treatment are likely to result in permanent brain damage.

The UMS also discussed multi-level diving for sport divers. This topic was reviewed in this column in March 1983. Since that time, the need for tables for dives involving several depths has become clear and some work is being done in this area. The message from the 1985 meeting, however, is that calculations for decompression from multi-level dives are still, for the most part, experimental. Your best bet for calculating decompression times are the U.S. Navy Repetitive Dive Tables, which you should always use conservatively. Conservative means: 1) Making only no decompression dives. 2) Diving no deeper than 130 feet with scuba. 3) Keeping your bottom time well within the no decompression limits. Examples are: 60 ft. for 50 min.; 70 for 40; 80 for 35; 90 for 25; 100 for 20. You can also add a three minute stop at ten feet before surfacing.

We discussed risks of decompression sickness in no decompression stop diving. It appears that a one to two percent risk of bends is present when diving to the limits of the Navy tables. Again, conservative use of the tables will minimize

the risk of bends.

Two papers were presented on diving accidents and diving related medical problems. We provided the diving medicine community with the past three years' experience from this column, based on your letters seeking advice. The audience was interested in the fact that most of the inquiries came from divers with common medical problems and not from divers with diving related injuries or diseases.

A representative from DAN, the Divers Alert Network, presented their experience with accidents. A striking statistic from their data is the evidence of permanent injury to the brain or spinal cord in one-third of divers who sustain damage to these organs from either air embolism or decompression sickness.

We heard that short deep dives are more likely to produce spinal cord injury than long shallow dives; that breast implants do not develop bends in normal sport diving, but could in saturation diving; and that the action of scopolamine, used for motion sickness, is not affected by pressure when diving.

An intriguing finding was presented by a group of U.S. Navy researchers. They found that some divers can develop changes in behavior as the only symptom of decompression sickness. Presumably, the injury is to the brain. This information should make us all more aware of the need to seek medical help when a diver develops bizarre or uncharacteristic behavior following a dive.

An important precedent was established at this 1985 meeting. We joined with the hyperbaric medicine community

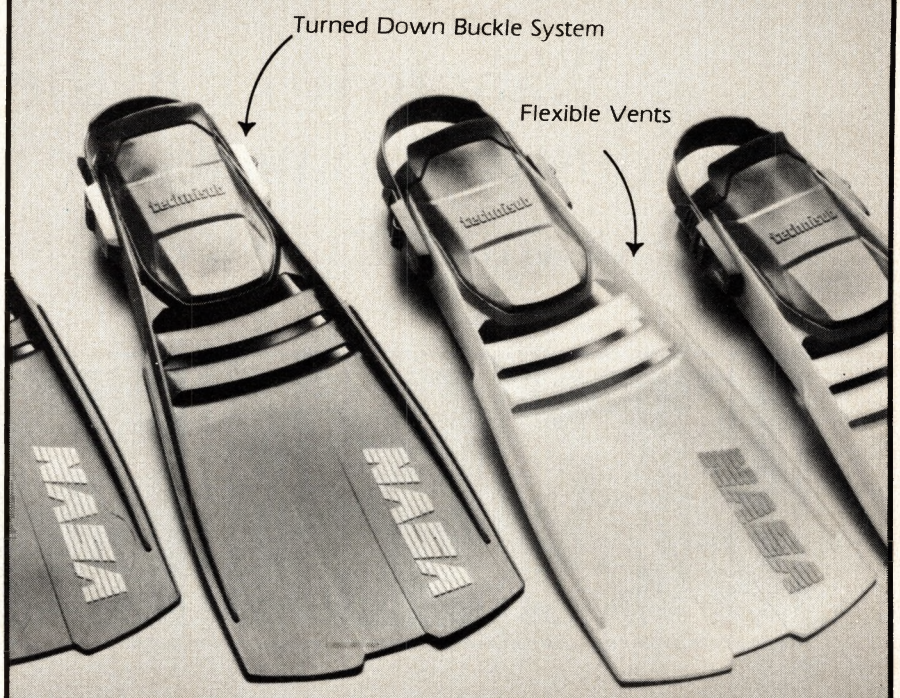


photo/George B. Hart, M.D.

in holding a joint meeting with topics of interest to both the diving physician and to the physician using hyperbaric medicine for treatment of medical diseases. This relatively new field involves physicians, nurses, paramedics and chamber operators in a hospital-based application of diving medicine. Much like the useful spinoffs from the space program, hyperbaric medicine is a spinoff of the many years of research and experience in diving medicine. Hyperbaric oxygen, administered in a pressure chamber, is useful in the treatment of several types of infection; in helping chronic wounds to heal; in reversing the effects of carbon monoxide; and in treatment of head injuries. There is a new field of hyperbaric nursing emerging and a session on its aspects was held at the meeting.

The UMS meeting provided all diving physicians with new information about the science and clinical practice of their specialty.

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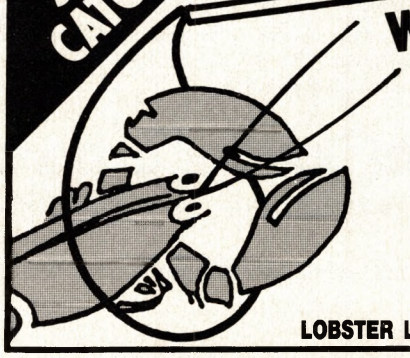
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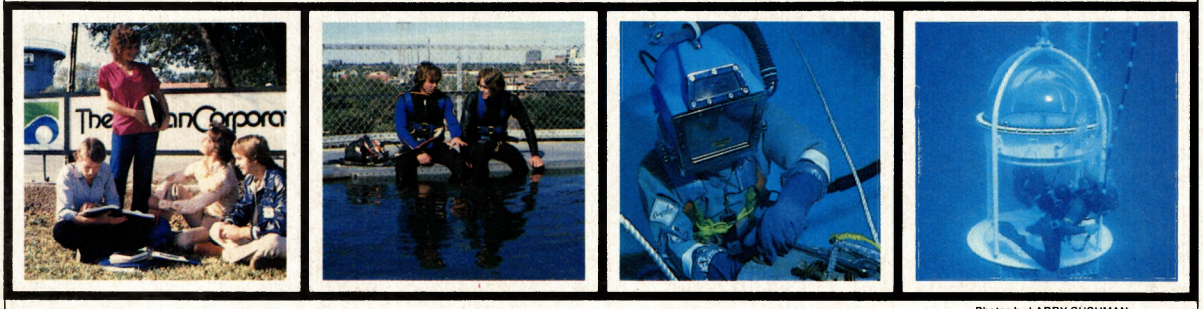
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Photos by LARRY CUSHMAN

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Wreck Facts

BY ELLSWORTH BOYD

Carl Panzarella, Jupiter, Florida says he heard the *Titanic* had a sister ship and wants to know more about it. The name of the ship was the *Olympic*. Majestic and luxurious, the *Olympic* set sail in 1911, a year before the *Titanic's* maiden voyage and subsequent disaster. Ironically, Captain Edward J. Smith relinquished command of the *Olympic* to take the *Titanic* on her infamous Atlantic crossing. Considered the best, Smith had commanded seven other ships, plus the *Olympic*, before taking the helm of the *Titanic*. This was to be his last voyage before retirement. An English magazine claimed the sister ships *Olympic* and *Titanic* to be "the rightful heirs to the Victorian dream, melding 19th century ideals with 20th century technology." The *Olympic* was involved in three collisions during her career. She was taken out of service and scrapped in 1935.

Scott Jenkins, Elkton, Maryland reports the salvage of a 427 pound safe from a World War II patrol craft, USS *Moonstone*, wrecked off the coast of Delaware. Jenkins, Ken Smith and Larry Keen successfully lifted the safe—buried in mud and silt in 130 feet—aboard the research vessel, *Gekos*, out of Indian River Inlet, Delaware. Contents of the extraordinary find included the captain's jewelry, military memorabilia, a gold watch still in its case and many documents. The *Moonstone* was a luxury yacht converted to a sub-chaser to thwart Nazi U-boats off our shores. One of our own ships, the destroyer USS *Geer*, accidentally rammed the *Moonstone* in 1943. Jenkins says 21 divers made more than 140 dives before the safe was discovered.

Harry Cooper, Fox Lake, Illinois publishes a newsletter for enthusiasts of German U-boats in World War II. Harry writes that a reunion of the crew of *U-162* was held recently in Papago Park, Arizona where they were held as prisoners from 1942 until the end of the war. A British destroyer sank the *U-162* in the Caribbean and took the prisoners. Cooper is trying to locate the captain of the *U-162*, Jurgen Wattenberg, who was at one time an executive for St. Pauli Girl beer in Munich, Germany. If you can help Harry, write to him at P.O. Box 537, Fox Lake, IL 60020.

Mike Sheen, College Park, Maryland says that Jim Cockran and Dave Walton recovered a valve, thermometer cover, a brass wrench and other artifacts from the wreck of the *Atlas*, a tanker sunk between Ocracoke Island and Cape Lookout, North Carolina. On another dive, Sheen retrieved a conglomeration of souvenirs from the British armed trawler, *Senateur Duhamel*, sunk off Cape Lookout shoals. When one of the chunks of conglomerate was broken, it revealed a stainless steel U.S. Navy spoon and a World War II starshell, used as an illuminating flare at sea. The starshell consisted of a brass timing head, a cylinder with a parachute and a weighted flare holder, all intact. The starshell also contained a packing slip with the names of the assemblers and inspectors on it.

Other North Carolina wreck enthusiasts and divers who visit the Tar Heel State will be pleased with a new book by Rod Farb, *Shipwrecks: Diving the Graveyard of the Atlantic*. The 265 page paperback includes maps, photos, drawings and detailed history of many wrecks, all of them identified and diveable. Appendixes include sections on underwater photography, charter dive services, Divers Alert Network and North Carolina statutes governing underwater salvage. The book is available from: Menasha Ridge Press, Route 3, Box 450, Hillsborough, North Carolina 27278. The price is $12.95 plus $1.50 shipping.

Jerry Lawrence, Warwick, Rhode Island is searching for a photo and further information on the *John Dwight*, a 153 ton steamship that foundered off Cuttyhunk Light, Massachusetts in 1923. Even today people refer to the mystery of the sinking of the *John Dwight*. The Vineyard Gazette, April 12, 1923 reported: "The *John Dwight*, a 125 to 150 foot steamer appears to have sunk. A life preserver marked '*John Dwight*, New York' was picked up by Edward Dalen of Menemsha. Later, eight bodies were found on the west shore of Vineyard Sound, seven wearing the same kind of life jackets. A score of barrels of bottled ale were retrieved floating in the sound. The medical examiner pronounced all deaths due to drowning." The *Dwight* was a rum runner, further proof accruing when many cases of Scotch whiskey and ale washed ashore. Foul play was suspected in the sinking when a crewman, with his skull crushed in, drifted into Menemsha in a small boat. The eight bodies recovered were blemished by lacerations and bruises, presumed to be results of a fight. Piracy and mutiny were suspected during an ensuing investigation that revealed the possibility of $100,000 being carried by the captain. There was a report of another vessel pulling alongside the *Dwight*, but that also remains a mystery. The wreck was found by the Coast Guard and in July 1923, federal agents detonated four charges of TNT in the *Dwight*'s hull to discourage other rum runners from salvaging the cargo. More information and a photo of the *John Dwight* would be appreciated by Jerry Lawrence, 37 North St., Warwick, RI 02886.

There's plenty of news for Great Lakes divers, starting with a letter from Cindy Crawford. The fall 1985 issue of Lake Superior Port Cities—a quarterly journal of contemporary and historical events around Lake Superior—featured the SS *Edmund Fitzgerald*. Launched in 1958—at that time the largest freighter to sail inland seas—the *Fitz* foundered in a storm in 1975 and broke in two when she went down in the deep waters of icy Lake Superior about 17 miles northwest of Whitefish Point, Michigan. Divers can still obtain a copy of this issue all about the *Edmund Fitzgerald*. You might be interested in a similar publication, Shipwrecks of Lake Superior. There is a 1985 issue available now and a 1986 edition coming out in May. For prices and further details contact: Cindy Crawford, Meierhoff Bldg., Suite 510, 325 Lake Ave., South, Duluth, MN 55802.

Safe diving to all. Be sure to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope when writing: Ellsworth Boyd, 1120 Bernoudy Rd., White Hall, MD 21161.

MAX



The Seatec Max

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC HANAUER

Seatec's Max regulator isn't really new. It has been around for nearly 15 years. But now it's a Seatec product. That's news because with it, Seatec has entered the ranks of full-line equipment manufacturers. That's a major move for a firm with humble beginnings.

Harry Ruscigno began operations in a tiny plant in Orange, California back in 1969. His company, Inflatable Systems, produced buoyancy compensators as an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) for several other companies. Ruscigno, a former aerospace engineer, developed the first quick-disconnect automatic inflation device using low-pressure air. He introduced double bag BCs, the H-shaped BC jacket and injection molding of urethane fittings—now standards of the industry. Eventually Ruscigno decided to take advantage of his own designs and began making BCs under the Seatec trademark. Seatec became a subsidiary of Inflatable Systems. Today the parent company continues to do OEM work for the overseas market. In addition, it produces an unusual line of products for the military and for fire and rescue agencies: inflatable snowshoes, pontoons, splints and igloos illustrate some offbeat applications of diving technology.

Seatec experienced rapid growth, moving into such items as equipment bags, weightbelts, speartips and shell drysuits. Masks, fins and spearguns were added to the line through overseas manufacturers. But, Seatec still makes 80 percent of the products it sells. Today, having outgrown two plants in Orange, Harry is building a new factory in Corona, California. He felt that one more product—a regulator—was required for Seatec to join the exclusive ranks of full-line manufacturers. During 1986, Seatec will introduce not one, but two. The premium regulator is being built in Japan. The entry level model, the Max, is the subject of this report.

Although he eventually plans to build his own regulator, Ruscigno felt it would be best to begin with a proven product. "All the bugs have been worked out (of this one)," he stated. "This is a good base from which to build a product line." The Max is produced in France but its original design is American. On close inspection it may be familiar to many readers. However, it has been updated over the years with some new materials and new features. The Max is a basic regulator, built to withstand the wear seen in rentals and instruction. Its first stage is an unbalanced piston, the second stage a lever action downstream valve.

There is nothing unusual in those specifications to set the Max apart from other regulators of the same design. In the world of computers, they would call it plain vanilla. But its French engineers have given the Max at least one unusual aspect: a floating seat in the second stage. If that doesn't make the Max a hot fudge sundae, at least we can call it French vanilla.

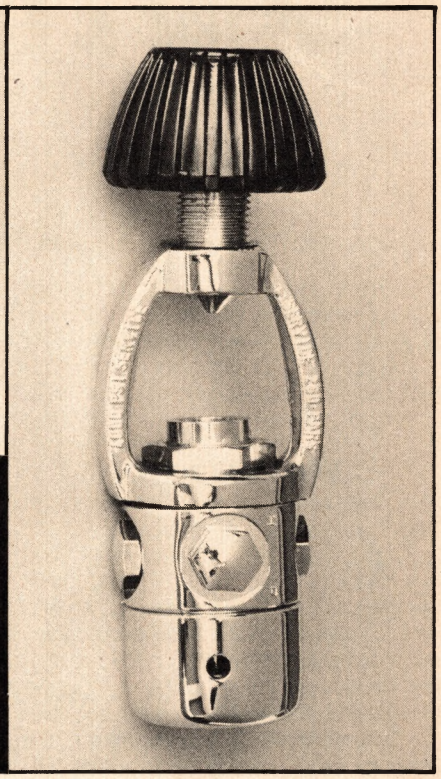
The floating seat prevents excessive

wear while the regulator is being stored. In most downstream second stages, the valve piston remains in contact with the valve seat by spring pressure. The sharp edge will eventually wear a groove on the seat, usually resulting in a slow leak. Some manufacturers supply a key, which can be installed by the user when the regulator is stored. This manually depresses the purge valve and relieves spring pressure to prevent this sort of wear. In the Max, wear is prevented in a more unusual way. The bearing surface of the valve is greater than the sealing surface. When pressure is greater on the outside area, as when the tank is turned on, the valve is forced downward against the seat. When pressure is turned off, the valve retracts upward toward the first stage. Thus, no action is needed on the part of the diver to relieve stress on the seat.

The second stage housing is made of Rislan®, a high-impact plastic similar to Delrin. Its advantages are light weight, as well as corrosion and impact resistance. The cover is also black Rislan; that of the octopus is yellow. A true-arc retaining ring—rather than screw threads—holds the downstream valve assembly in place. A dimple molded into the housing fits a projection in the valve assembly to prevent rotation. The advantage of this arrangement is prevention of cracks in the housing, which could be caused by screwing the valve assembly in too tightly. The disadvantage is that a special tool is required to remove the circlip, so this part is not user serviceable. Most of us would be better off leaving regulator repair to the professionals anyway.

George Garrison of National Scuba, Huntington Beach, California, thoroughly bench-tested the Max before Seatec decided to import it. He rated it a basic regulator with a solid, safe design. "It should be easy and economical to maintain," he concluded. "It comes apart quickly, there are few O-rings and the piston first stage is easy to work on." He estimated the annual overhaul cost at about $30 compared to $40 for most other regulators.





Seatec is now marketing regulators under its own name. The Max is a basic unit, built to withstand the heavy wear seen in rentals and instruction. Above: The Max's second stage housing is made of Rislan®, a high impact plastic. The cover is also Rislan. In production models the mouthpiece and diaphragm will be made of silicone rubber. Right: The first stage has one high pressure port and three low pressure ports.

We tested an early model, which lacked some of the features the Seatec production version run will have. The diaphragm and mouthpiece will be made of silicone, ours was neoprene rubber. Even the decal may be different when it reaches your dive store—Harry dummied one up for our photo session. But performance of the Max should result in no surprises. In shallow water, breathing and clearing were easy. Occasionally the second stage would freeflow when removed from the mouth during a breath. But it was a mild flow, which usually stopped by itself when the regulator returned to a state of balance. The more sensitive regulators will flow until the mouthpiece is turned down.

The Max leaked slightly in the upside down position. This is common of most regulators that don't freeflow in that position and the Max didn't. Breathing was harder when I was on my back looking toward the surface. While gently sipping air, the flow was smooth with no interruptions and no feeling of air being pumped into my mouth. Only in this position was there an obvious difference between the Max and a more sensitive regulator.

The deep test began with a pop and a loud hiss of escaping air topside. But it didn't come from the Max, it came from my comparison regulator. Its first stage diaphragm had blown, rendering it useless. The Max was pressed into a more demanding test than I had planned, serving as my only regulator for a full day of diving. It met the challenge in stride. At 100 feet, it supplied all the air needed, even when I was kicking hard. Only when comparing breathing effort with my buddies' octopuses—both premium priced models—did I notice slightly harder breathing from the Seatec Max.

When tank pressure dropped below 1,000 pounds, breathing effort gradually increased. This is typical of unbalanced first stages: They are more dependent upon tank pressure. On the positive side, this will give the diver plenty of warning that air is running low.

The Max is an economically priced regulator for the recreational diver. Its rugged, simple design makes it reliable and easy to maintain. With its long production history and Seatec standing behind it, parts and service will be readily accessible. The price of the Max is $190. See one at your nearest Seatec dealer. For dealer information contact Seatec, 600 N. Batavia, Orange, CA 92666.

SEATEC MAX

First stage:	
Type	Unbalanced piston
Maximum pressure	4,000 psi
Material	Forged brass, chrome plated
High pressure port	One, ⅜"
Low pressure ports	Three, ⅜"
Environmental kit	Optional
Intermediate pressure	145 psi
Length of hose	27 inches
Second stage:	
Type	Downstream lever
Maximum airflow	23 cu. ft./min.
Housing material	High-impact plastic
Diaphragm	Silicone
Exhaust valve	Silicone
Price	$190

SDM's U/W Photo Class

Getting Started

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM AND CATHY CHURCH

If you're looking for a way to make your diving more interesting—consider the joy and challenge of photography. As a photographer, you can not only share your undersea adventures with pictures, but may begin winning prizes in contests.

YOU CAN DO IT

You don't have to be a "brain" to get started in underwater photography. As Cathy puts it, "Even Jim can do it." You do, however, need to be a good diver. This doesn't mean you have to be able to swim up Niagara Falls while wearing ten weightbelts, insist on carrying your own tank or dive below 1,000 feet. A good diver is one who stays within his or her own limitations and is comfortable in the water! If you are newly certified and still a bit nervous, or haven't been diving for years, consider taking a few guided dives with a qualified instructor before trying to take underwater pictures.

Once you've decided you might enjoy underwater photography, taking a course in it could save you a bunch of money. Even if the course is in the back of a dive shop in the middle of winter and the underwater instruction is in a pool, you will learn what to buy, and more important, what not to buy. However, beware of an instructor who emphasizes equipment sales more than instruction.

MAKE HASTE SLOWLY

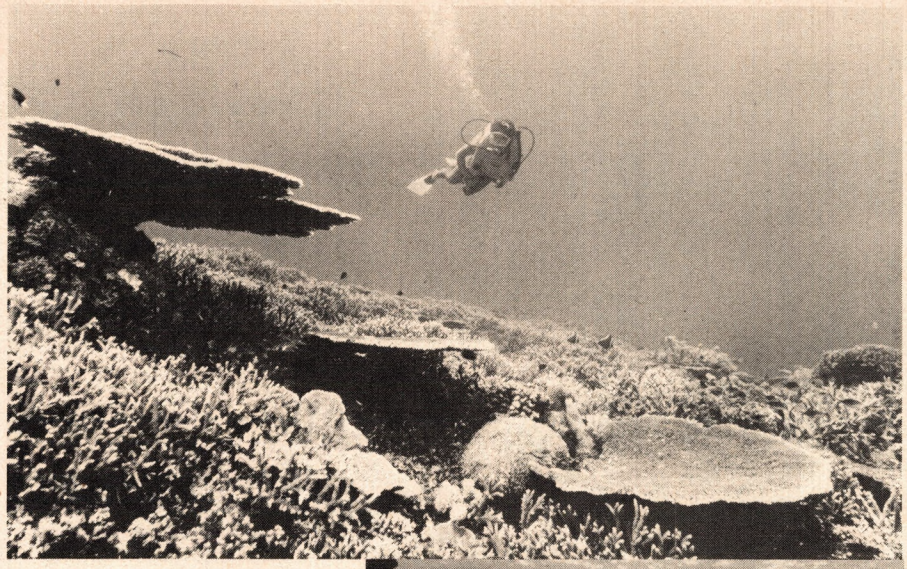
"Don't bother me with details," said the diver who jumped into the ocean with his new camera—without reading all the instructions. Underwater, at a dream vacation dive site full of friendly, colorful fish, he couldn't figure out why his automatic camera wouldn't function. Learn how to use your camera topside first—then try it underwater.

After learning how to operate your new camera topside, practice in a pool. Take some snapshots of your kids, spouse or the drain at the bottom. Your goal is to learn how to handle the camera and hold it steady. You may need to stand by the edge of the pool and review the instructions or hand the camera to a pair of dry hands if something goes wrong.

When you do head for open water, resist the temptation to try and do everything on one dive! The probability of something going wrong will be the



The underwater environment can offer obstacles to good photography not encountered above the surface. Cold temperatures can reduce concentration. Colors are filtered out with depth, surge can make it hard to hold position and particles suspended in the water can reduce its clarity. In dark, dirty water, such as this surgy kelp bed, use a fast film that doesn't need much light for the exposure. Use upward camera angles to separate your subject from the dark bottom and use strobe light to accent details.





Above: Scenic views, like this one of a diver suspended over a coral reef, utilize available light and require clear water and a steady camera. Right: With moving subjects, such as a diver swimming slowly with a school of fish, pan (move) the camera with the subject. A little strobe fill can add color and sharpen details.

square of the number of persons, items of equipment and goals involved. Keep it simple. Try one new aspect of underwater photography at a time.

WHAT'S NEW AND DIFFERENT?

While the basics of photography—loading the camera, making the necessary adjustments for exposure and distance, aiming the camera and triggering the shutter—are the same underwater as above, there are important differences:

Environment: The underwater environment can sometimes be difficult. If you are cold, being tossed in the surge or fighting a current, tasks that were simple in your warm home become almost impossible. If you are shivering, there is no way you can concentrate on underwater photography. Therefore, if you wish to take pictures in cold water, your dive gear must keep you warm and comfortable. This is also why so many photographers travel to tropical resorts: The water is warmer and calmer.

Suspended particles: The photograph you took of your dive buddy may turn out to be a "fuzzygraph" if you take his/her picture the same way you would above water. The reason is that water isn't as clear as air. It is filled with tiny (and sometimes not so tiny) particles of marine life and debris that block your camera's view of the subject. And, the greater the distance between camera and subject, the greater the number of these suspended particles blocking the view. It's like trying to take a topside photograph through fog or falling snow. To reduce fuzziness, get as close as possible to your subject to minimize the number of particles you must photograph through.

Movement: Your photograph may also turn out to be a "blurrygraph." If you snapped a picture of your dive guide as the current whooshed you through a crevice, the camera, subject and background were all moving when you took the picture. You must hold the camera steady because camera movement and moving subjects add up to blurred pictures. And, if the water was dirty, you may have fuzzblurgraph—a combination of a fuzzygraph and a blurrygraph. There is an exception to the rule of holding the camera steady. If your subject is a diver and a school of fish swimming by you, pan (move) the camera with the subject.

Loss of light: "It was dark down there," said the underwater photographer whose pictures were fuzzy, blurred and without obvious subjects. Limited light usually requires wide lens openings that reduce depth of field—the area in front of the camera that will be sharply focused. Dark conditions may also require slow shutter speeds and the slower the speed, the greater the blur because of camera and subject movement.

Three ways you can improve your pictures in dark, dirty water are to: (a) Use a fast film that doesn't need much light to take the picture; (b) Use upward camera angles that silhouette your subjects against brighter midwater and surface backgrounds; and (c) Use a strobe to add light for the picture.

Loss of color: When underwater, you saw colors. The squirrelfish were red, the sponges orange and your dive buddy had pink flesh tones. But your pictures lack the bright colors you saw. How can this be? As light passes through water, warm colors (such as red) are absorbed. This loss of color increases with both depth and distance from your subject.

The reason you saw more color than your film is because of color adaptation. Your brain adapted to the bluish underwater light so you saw it more as white light. Thus, your eye saw brighter colors than actually existed and than your film can record.

To make underwater pictures more colorful: (a) Stay in shallow water and stay close to your subjects to reduce the amount of color lost by absorption; (b) Use filters to enhance colors; (c) Use electronic flash to restore colors.

MAKING MONEY WITH U/W PHOTOGRAPHY

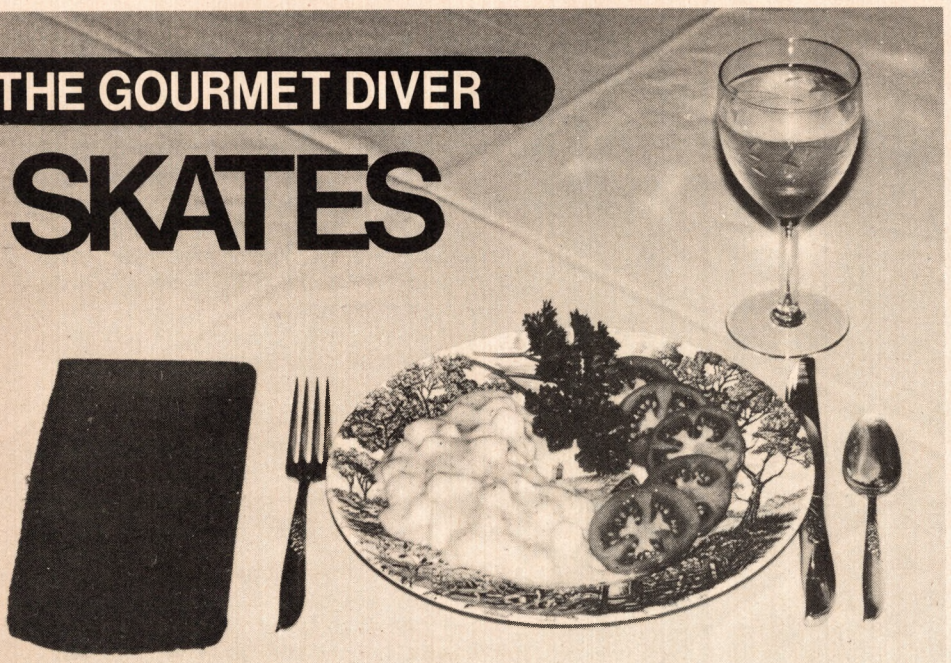
"How can I become a professional underwater photographer?" is a question we've heard hundreds of times. And, our answer is this: Very few people can earn a living solely as underwater photographers. They usually combine underwater photography with writing or teaching. Try using underwater photography as an addition to your present vocation. If you work in a dive shop, start by giving simple, introductory courses. If you are working as a divemaster or guide, begin by taking underwater photos of your guests. If you don't work in the dive industry, test market some color prints at local art shows or galleries.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this article has been to introduce you to some of the basics of underwater photography. Subsequent articles will expand on the topics in this article and provide you with basic knowledge and techniques. Remember: You can do it!

THE GOURMET DIVER

SKATES



photos/Andrew Martinez

BY DAVID F. DONAVEL

They're ugly. When they strand on beaches dogs love to roll in them. Surf and boat fishermen disdain them and usually just cut their lines rather than trouble themselves with the critters. Yet, according to one authority, "skate wings are better than the finest fillet of sole." Despite awful looks and a bad reputation, these winged relatives of the rays and sharks are a delectable and grossly underused food source and one readily available to the gourmet diver.

East Coast skates (*Raja sp.*) are most common on sandy seafloors where they forage for small crustaceans, clams, worms or anything else that lives in the soft sand. As the water warms in spring, skates move in great numbers to the shallows and so are easy prey during the most popular diving season. Sometimes a skate remains half buried—its eyes visible first to the careful observer and then its ray-like shape beneath a thin layer of sand. At other times it just rests on the bottom. In either case, approach the animal cautiously. Should you startle it, it will move a short distance and then settle once more. Approach even more cautiously and you may catch it. A skate that has been severely frightened will take off for a long distance and probably won't let you get close enough for capture. Look for its friends. [Be sure your intended prey is a skate and not a stingray or torpedo ray.]

Small skates can be bagged by hand, but it's a good idea to wear gloves even for the little guys since they have tough cartilaginous spurs on their tails that can cut. Skates are neither poisonous nor electrified, however, and with precautions taken against their tails, the diver is fairly safe. Large skates are better speared since picking one up is a lot like trying to carry a flag in a hurricane: The creature, strong and at home in the water, will almost always shake free. When spearing, stick the animal solidly through the body and near the head if you can. Anchor the spear in the sand beneath the skate and grab its tail. Arrange beforehand for your dive buddy to hold open your bag so you can contain the animal quickly. Skates go berserk when attacked and while not dangerous are hard to control.



Skates have cartilaginous spurs on their tails, but gloves are adequate protection. Skate has a flavor reminiscent of scallops.

Because skates spawn year-round, there is no time when taking them is especially destructive to the species. Once you've carried your catch to boat or shore, cleaning is easy and best done im-

(Continued on Page 82)

RECIPES

SKATE SAUTEED

Saute floured skate cubes in olive oil and fresh garlic, adding fresh parsley just before serving. This is especially fine served with lightly steamed vegetables, wild rice and a dry white wine.

SKATE SAUTERNE

2 C cubed skate
4 T butter
fresh parsley
½ C dry white wine

Saute skate cubes in butter and fresh parsley until golden brown. Add the wine, simmer and serve on buttered toast. Again, this is good with fresh vegetables, and dry white wine as beverage.

FRIED SKATE

Dip skate cubes in beaten egg, mixed with a little milk. Roll them in fine cracker crumbs and fry in deep fat at 375°F. Serve hot with a fresh garden salad.

DILLED SKATE

4 T butter
3 T flour
½ C fish broth (chicken bouillon will do)
1 C milk
1 tsp. fresh, chopped dill
Additional butter for sauteing

Melt the butter and add the flour. Cook until slightly colored. Add the broth and stir until creamy. Slowly mix in the milk, heat and stir until thickened. Season with salt and pepper to taste and add the dill. While preparing the sauce, saute the skate quickly in butter. Serve the fish smothered in the dill sauce.

TOMATO SKATE

Poach cubed skate in a mixture of water, salt and vinegar. Drain and smother in a rich tomato sauce. Serve with sauteed onions, Italian bread, unsalted butter and your favorite red wine.

SKATE AND CAPERS

Poach cubed skate in a mixture of water, salt and vinegar. Drain and keep warm. Melt a quantity of butter, add a dash of wine vinegar and lots of capers. Pour the caper sauce over the fish and serve with boiled new potatoes, a fresh vegetable and white wine.

SKATE SALAD

Cut up cold cooked skate—leftovers are excellent—mix with chopped celery, chopped onion and mayonnaise. Season with salt and pepper. Serve on a bed of fresh lettuce. Skate salad makes tasty sandwiches.



photos/Bonnie J. Cardone

Garrett XL500 ProPulse

BY JIM WALKER



Top: The XL500 Pro Pulse package includes everything shown except the Scubamate handle (attached to electronics box). Above: Three control knobs do it all.

When I reviewed Garrett Metal Detector's XL500 amphibious metal detector for the September, 1982 SKIN DIVER, I was impressed by its rugged, compact design. It was easy to set up and easy to operate. Withstanding the test of time, the overall design of the XL500 hasn't changed since then. However, there's always room for improvement, and Garrett has made several important changes to the design of the device that aren't visible at first glance:

First and foremost, the XL500 is now the XL500 Pro Pulse. This is much more than just a name change. The metal detector is now equipped with pulse induction. This new circuitry ignores mineralized iron and salt in the soil or sea bottom. The result is a more clearly defined response to metallic objects, with less time spent tuning the system.

The XL500's controls have been simplified as well; three, easy to operate knobs do it all. The center knob switches the detector on. (For the first two seconds after it is switched on the detector's meter needle will register the level of charge on the batteries.) The knob has three on positions for maximum, normal and minimum detection depth. These allow the user to concentrate his/her search at the depth most likely to produce the objects searched for without interference from deeper or shallower objects. An example would be a search at minimum depth beneath the seafloor surface for a ring lost only moments before.

The left-hand knob sets the volume heard through the headphones. This is set for a barely audible tone when the device isn't registering a find. The full range of the knob is only 270 degrees, so setting the audio level is quick and easy.

The right-hand knob allows the user to eliminate detection of unwanted trash. The range of this knob is also only 270 degrees, again making adjustment easy. Nine positions are marked around the knob. The 0 setting provides no trash elimination. The 3 position eliminates foil and rust. The 6 position eliminates foil, rust, bottlecaps and tiny nails. The 7 position eliminates all the above plus aluminum pulltabs and other small trash.

The XL500 Pro Pulse and its headphones are submersible to 200 feet, but can be used above water as well. The detector comes with two handles. The 12 inch handle is for underwater use. In this configuration the diver wears the electronics box strapped to the chest, thigh or waist. The longer handle is for topside use (dry or in shallow water) and is adjustable from 36 to 48 inches. An optional, 22 inch Scubamate attachment (pictured here) is available. I found this excellent for underwater use. With the Scubamate the XL500 Pro Pulse weighed only 6 pounds, 6 ounces in air and was slightly negative U/W.

In addition to the audio tone, the XL500 registers finds visually. The meter needle gauges hits on a scale from 1 to 10.

The XL500 Pro Pulse is powered by rechargeable ni-cad cells. Both a 110 volt AC and 12 volt DC charger are included. The chargers plug into the same port as the headphone jack. Fifteen hours gives the cells a full charge, providing about 10 hours of operation.

All parts of the XL500 are made of corrosion resistant materials. However, the outside of the electronics box, headphones and handles should be rinsed in fresh water and allowed to dry after your day of diving. The device shouldn't be left out in the hot sunlight. Everything pictured here (except for the Scubamate handle—$79.95) is included with the detector. The package sells for $799.95.

The XL500 Pro Pulse comes with a limited one year warranty. It, and a complete line of other metal detectors and treasure hunting gear, is available at Garrett dealers. For information contact Garrett Metal Detectors, 2814 National Drive, Garland, Texas 75041.

Chronosport's POLARIS



Matching Watches With Matching Quality

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY

There comes a time in every diver's career when he or she begins searching for a really tasteful underwater watch that can be worn in or out of the water. It has to perform flawlessly during the diving day, yet look good on an evening dinner date at the finest restaurant. Chronosport has produced such a timepiece. The Polaris is built like an armored tank, operates with the precision of a classic Swiss clock, yet has the style and grace of an expensive sports car.

Introduced in mid 1985, the Polaris is an improved version of Chronosport's Champagne Sea Quartz and Mini Quartz models. These have been major factors in Chronosport's success since 1978. The design is time tested and the watch has become one of the most popular of this era. Following in the footsteps of the Champagne Sea Quartz, Chronosport has introduced both a men's and women's model. A matched pair, these watches make ideal gifts for anniversaries, birthdays or Christmas.

The men's model features a large, simple dial face yet is extremely stylish in appearance. The dial measures one and one-quarter inches in diameter with simple bars marking the hour positions. The hour and minute hands are wide, beefy needles that can be easily read at a distance of three feet. The date box conveniently displays both the day and the date, such as "Sat 23." There is no need to refer to a calendar when determining the day of the week.

The women's model looks much like the men's, but is much smaller and looks very feminine. The dial face is three-quarters of an inch in diameter and all the other features are half-scale. The only difference is the date box, which carries the date only. Both models feature a rich gold finish, with matching gold bracelet and black bezel.

What makes the Polaris different than its Champagne predecessor? Plenty. First, the Polaris features a brand new thin line watch movement that has allowed Chronosport to reduce the thickness of the case. This sleek new model is only three-eighths of an inch thick and literally hugs the wrist.

Don't let the slim look fool you, however. This watch is tough. It is rated for a diving depth of 1,000 feet (30 atmospheres). Its durable case, stainless steel back and thin profile are perfectly suited for the rigors of diving.

The Polaris quartz movement is technologically advanced as compared to the earlier Champagne Sea Quartz. The new watch operates on a three year battery and is equipped with a clever end-of-life warning indicator. When the Polaris battery is within seven to ten days of reaching exhaustion, the second hand begins galloping around the dial face. Instead of moving in the normal second-to-second ratchet fashion, the second hand jumps four seconds at a time. This bizarre movement is so startling the wearer will have no trouble recognizing the warning.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the Polaris is a revolutionary gold finish, known as the Polorit plating process. It is another first for Chronosport. Developed by Rotel in Switzerland, this consists of an extremely hard covering based on the principle of multi-layering.

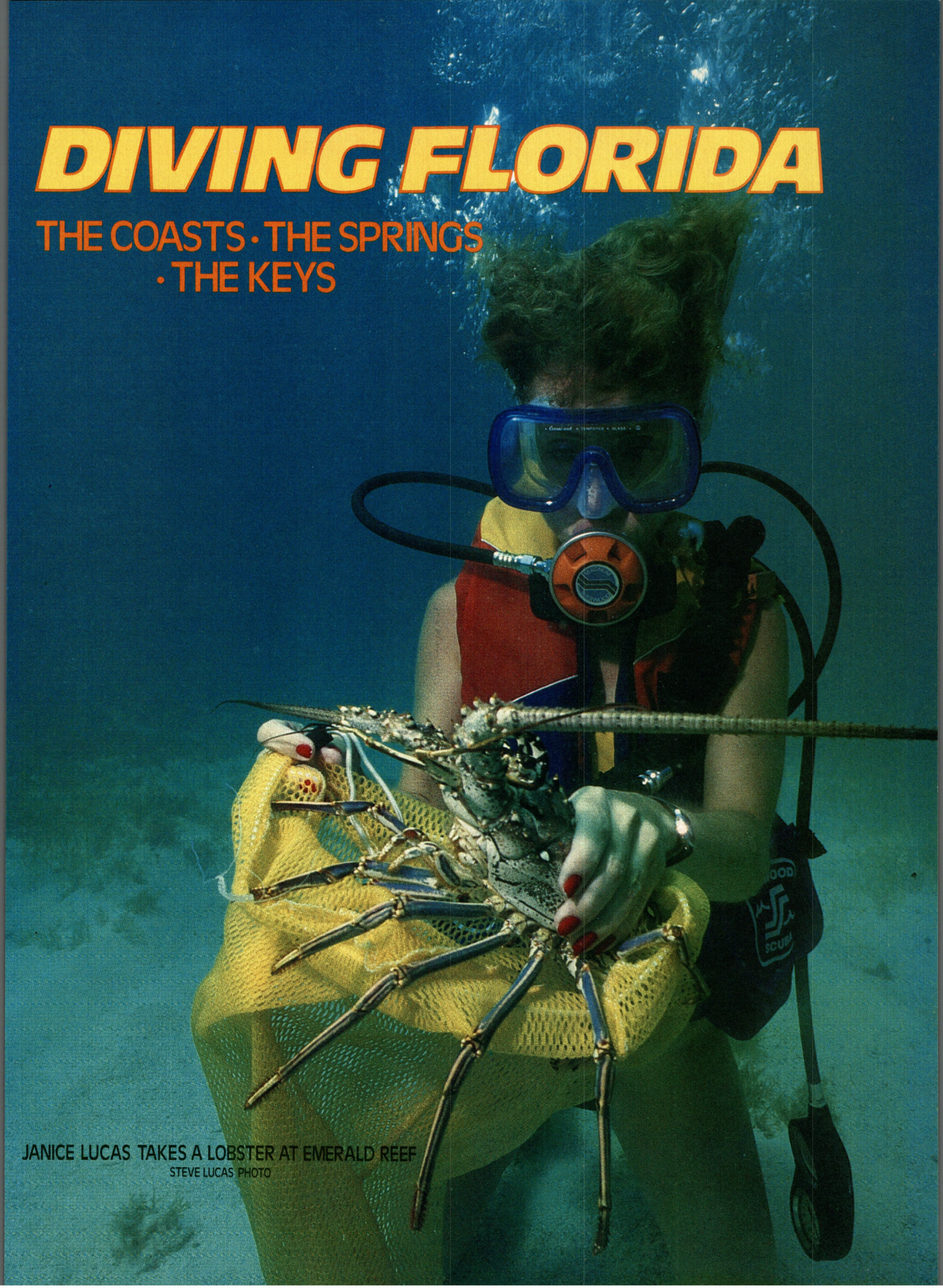
Polorit is comparable to a ten micron gold plating but is five times harder. It is super resistant to erosion, 100 times more resistant to abrasion and will not peel. It has a rich gold luster but is less expensive than gold plating. Thanks to the Polorit process, Chronosport has been able to offer the Polaris for a retail price of only $295.

Chronosport thinks so highly of the Polaris that the company is offering an extended six year limited warranty with the purchase of each watch. The buyer automatically receives a two year warranty and can upgrade to a six year warranty by simply sending the watch in every two years for service and preventive maintenance. The watch must be sent to the Chronosport Service Center and the charge for this biannual servicing is approximately $40.

For more information about the Polaris watch, contact your local Chronosport dive store dealer or write to: Chronosport Inc., 47 Water Street, Norwalk, Connecticut 06854.

DIVING FLORIDA

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JANICE LUCAS TAKES A LOBSTER AT EMERALD REEF
STEVE LUCAS PHOTO

FLORIDA

A Complete Dive Guide Of The Sunshine State





Florida has an extensive coastline, offering a wide variety of diving. Inland, freshwater springs offer incredible U/W visibility. Top: Dolphins swim with snorkelers near Destin. Above: A Florida dive boat heads for the next site. Below: A diver and turtle near Fowey Reef. Bottom: Gentle manatee.





TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE LUCAS

His smile is as big as the sun and when he strolls up you just can't hold back a grin. With a face that says Florida to millions, he is the state's ambassador extraordinaire. He rarely (some say never) speaks off camera, but his unspoken message is universally translated. "Welcome to the Sunshine State," he says without a word, black ears pointing to the sky. Welcome to the warmth of a sunny, fun filled playground that is rich with excitement—places to go, things to do, and more places to dive than you have time to see!

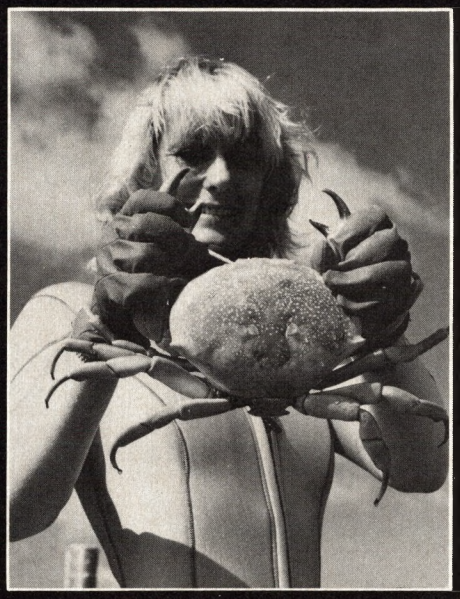
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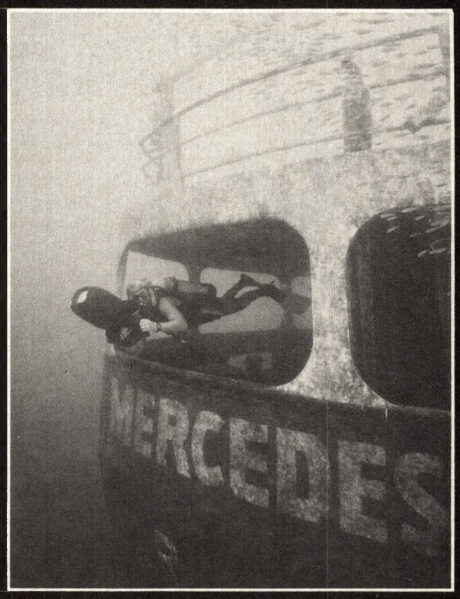
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FLORIDA

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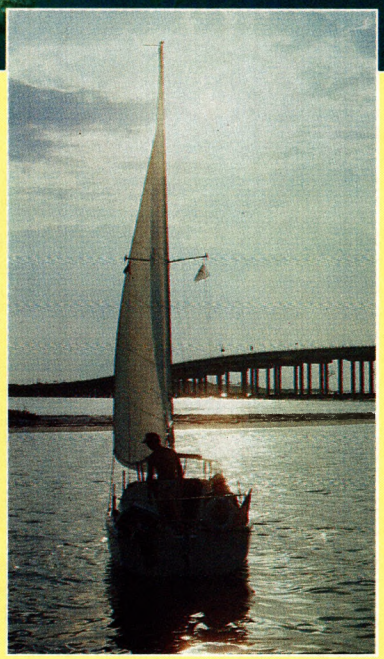
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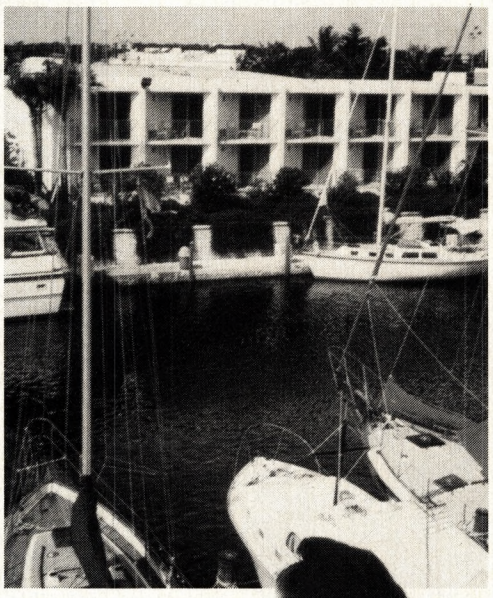
mile stretch people make a ritual out of watching each setting sun. A half hour before it slips into the sea, they gather with cameras and bread crumbs. Seagulls wait overhead as the tidbits are tossed skyward. The party continues until well after the crimson ball has vanished.

At Fort Walton and Panama City, you can watch dolphins perform at the Gulfarium or Gulf World, then you can careen down a roller coaster. If your interest is airplanes or naval history, visit the Pensacola Naval Air Station museum. Some of the nation's most historic fighter planes are on display there.

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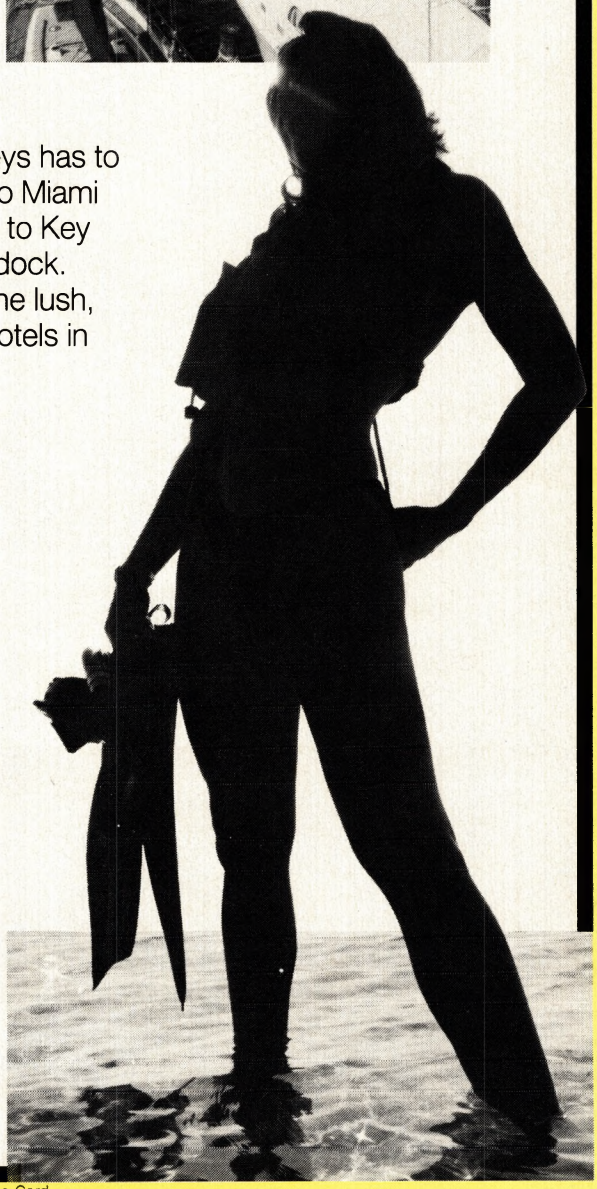
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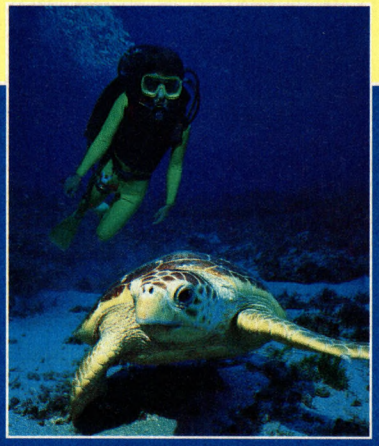
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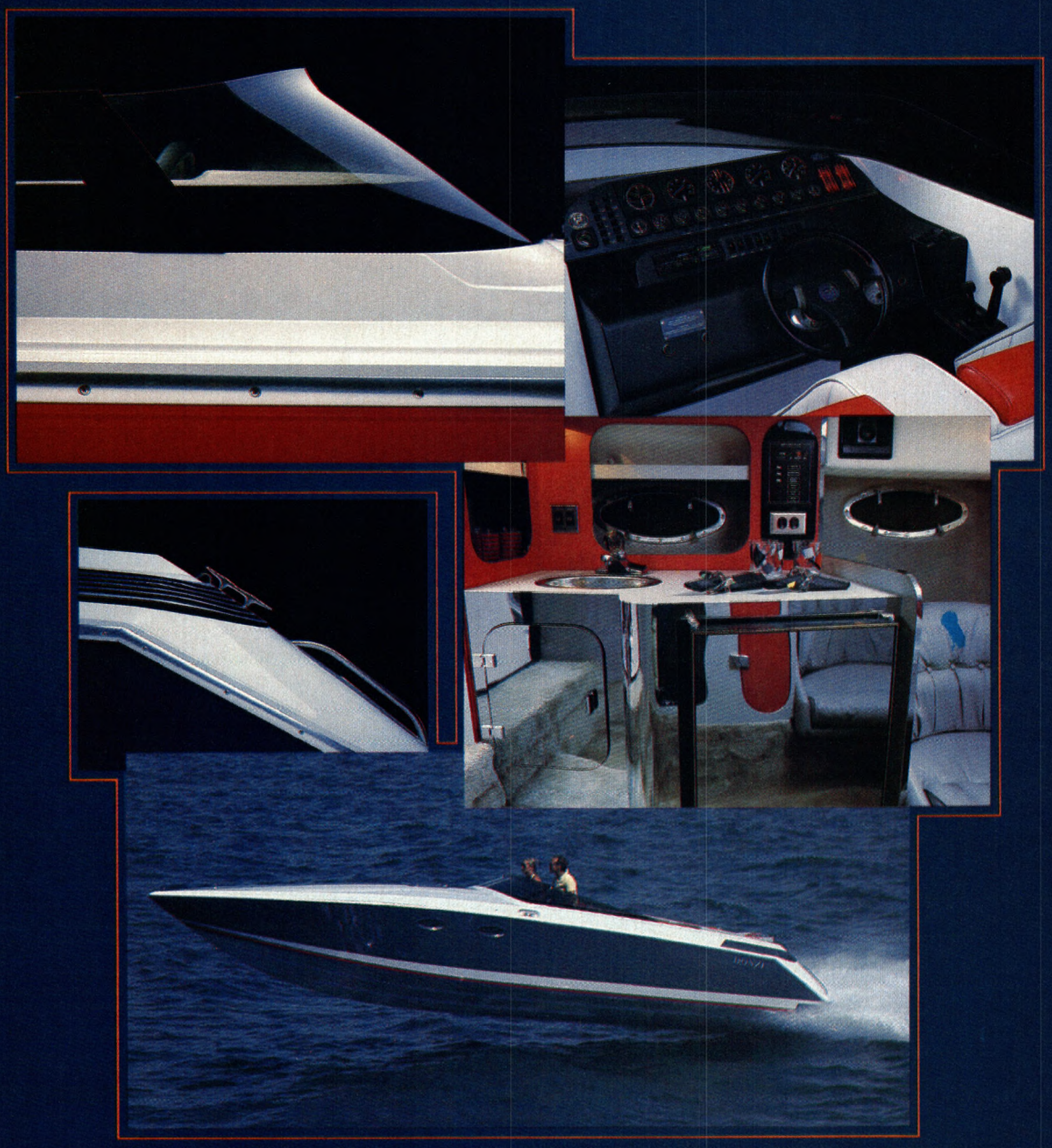






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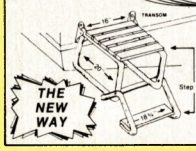
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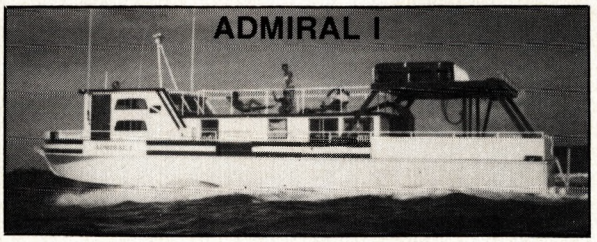
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Between Vero Beach and Fort Pierce, keep a sharp eye out as you walk along the beaches of the Treasure Coast. Golden doubloons and silver pieces of eight from the treasure galleons of the Spanish main have been found in the sand.

At Palm Beach, take a slow drive through one of America's wealthiest communities or a fun drive across the plains of Africa. Lions cross in front of your car and giraffes stare through your windows at Lion Country Safari.

In Fort Lauderdale, celebrate spring break any day of the year on one of the country's most popular beaches. Take a dinner cruise on a paddlewheeler, or splash into a man-made ocean at breakneck speed from one of the gigantic slides of Six Flags Atlantis.

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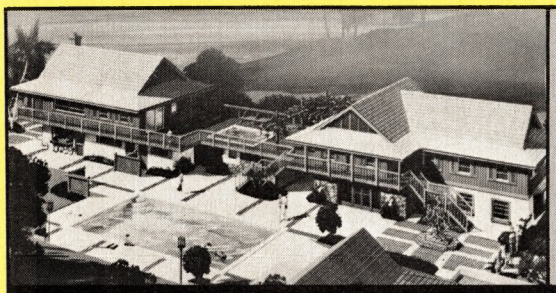
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FLORIDA

sawgrass ponds. Out in the swamps, alligators bellow loudly while coming to within just a few feet of the park's elevated wooden walkways. Delicate white flowered lily pads float on the surface of the gator holes.

Down in the Florida Keys, take a ride over the coral on one of several glassbottom cruise boats; sample stone crab claws, fresh shrimp or lobster at any of the dozens of fine seafood restaurants; or see the dolphins leap at Flipper's Seaschool. If you have always wanted to catch a big one, challenge a marlin or shark to a dual of strength and endurance. The fishing fleet at Islamorada can show you right where they are.

Key West treats you daily to an impromptu afternoon circus on the docks at Mallory Square. While the native "Conchs" and their guests watch the sun slide away, balladeers sing, jugglers juggle, fire-eaters consume and puppeteers work their craft. At the end of Green Street you can hold a bar of gold worth a quarter of a million dollars, see the jewels of Spanish kings and queens and touch a pile of silver bars from the wreck of the treasure galleon *Atocha*. Valued in the hundreds of millions, much of this latter is on display at Mel Fisher's Treasure Salvors Museum.

If diving is your primary reason for visiting Florida, you don't have to drive far. One of the hottest, and least publicized, areas is right at its very top. Along most of Florida's Panhandle the rock reefs are alive with fish and colorful crustaceans. Often quite clear, the water has a rich emerald color. From Pensacola to Apalachicola, and especially between Destin and Panama City, the gulf is thick with nutrients. A nursery for much of the Caribbean, the water from Cozumel and the Mexican Yucatan flows directly here bringing with it many tropical animals. Plankton gives the water its emerald color.

With a large supply of food, the reefs have schools of amberjack, cigar shaped baitfish, spadefish, angels and more. In depths shallow enough for beginners, out to those that require advanced dive experience, these ancient limestone regions are sliced with crevices and pocked with holes. Basket and barrel sponges dot the sand while exotic shells and crabs with long spindly legs hide among the cover.

Bland at first in the subdued light, the reefs jump with color when a flashlight or strobe is aimed in their direction. A nearly perfect habitat for fish and invertebrates, it is also one of the best environments for the spiny lobster. Here they often weigh as much as ten pounds. Although no one would throw them back, those less than four pounds are considered small!

For spearfishermen, this underwater hunting ground is superb. A large, level shelf that descends so gradually it can be

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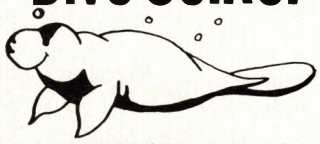
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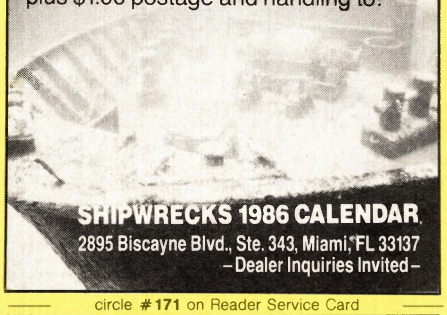
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FLORIDA

dived more than 20 miles offshore, it provides a great deal of coverage for game animals. Snapper, grouper and amberjack weighing as much as 50 pounds are frequently taken.

Near Pensacola the reefs are not as rich, but the wrecks more than make up for their absence. The shallowest is the rusting superstructure of the **USS *Massachusetts***. In 30 feet of water, the ship is more than 350 feet long and, at low tide, can be seen from the surface. Reef fish are common throughout its bulkheads.

Farther offshore, the 400 foot Russian freighter ***San Pablo*** is a popular wreck site. Hit by the torpedoes of a German U-boat, it sank after repeated repair efforts failed. Covered with the beautiful spiny oyster, it is popular with shell collectors. At 80 feet, it requires a bit of experience, but is an otherwise easy dive.

Between Fort Walton Beach and Destin the natural rock reefs are close to shore and dense. Some are patches of limestone on a sandy bottom, others are shaped like horseshoes or are staggered in stair steps.

Most of the best reefs are in depths ranging from 80 to 100 feet. Others are shallower, but few are in waters of less than 60 feet. One of the most exciting, **Timberholes**, is an all day excursion owing to its distance from shore. Just below the surface an army of barracuda guards the site. Below them, herds of silvery spadefish chase each other from here to there and back. Above the bottom, cigarfish are so thick you almost have to push them aside. Alongside the break, gray ocean triggers cruise the territory looking for a meal. On the rocks, frogfish have skin that appears to be plastic. Behind them, lobster hide in the crevices.

Numerous other reefs are similar, although perhaps not as dramatic. **Amberjack**, **Long Reef**, **Anna's**, the **Eighteens**, **Frangista**, and **White Hill** are all popular. You may find some of these places called by different names, however; it seems each local operator gives each site his own personal designation.

Almost all are perfect for shell collectors. Under any ledge you can find spiny oysters, colorful cowries, jewel boxes, lion's paws, queen helmets and many others. Each uses its individual camouflage for protection. If you are very lucky, you might find a treasured triton's trumpet.

In addition to reefs, Panama City has an excellent selection of wrecks. The 105 foot tugboat ***Grey Ghost*** was purposely sunk as an artificial reef. Just more than 100 feet deep, it sits upright, leaning slightly to the starboard side. Schools of snapper race from stern to bow and around the wheelhouse. Amberjack are almost always present, constantly circling the schools of baitfish. Inside, treasured seashells cling to the metal.

Near shore, the ***Chickasaw*** sits in 70 feet. Also purposely sunk, its open framework hosts thousands of baitfish and the occasional jewfish.

Other wrecks, such as the ***Tarpon***, ***Simpson*** and ***Leroy*** yield an occasional diving treasure. Brass valves, vintage bottles and other pieces are sometimes brought up from their graves.

Sunk more than 40 years ago, the single wreck that gives the most, in collectibles, fish life and lore, is the ***Empire Mica***, an authentic World War II wreck. The British tanker was only on the second leg of her first voyage when the Germans struck. Trying to sneak around the coastline with more than 11,000 tons of petroleum distillate, she was too low in the water to hide in the shallow bays. By keeping her in less than 100 feet of water, her captain thought she would be safe. By a nearly full moon, on a calm summer night, her 465 foot length made a highly visible target in the submarine's periscope. On June 29, 1942, 21 miles off Appalachicola near Cape San Blas, her explosive cargo brought an eerie glow to the night sky. Miles up the coast the explosion and fire could be seen and heard. Thirty-three men lost their lives.

With two torpedoes ripping away the bulkheads on her port side like tin foil, the *Mica* drifted for a day, finally sinking in just over 100 feet of water. Sixty feet above the sand, her bow is mobbed with barracuda. One hundred pound amberjack constantly chase each other across the bulkheads. On her deck, 70 feet below the surface, a 25 foot spare prop lies flat. Ladders lead through open passageways and portholes remain attached. Thousands of tropicals parade by, constantly pursued by game fish. Dived primarily out of Port St. Joe, 24 miles away, she is too large to see on a single trip.

Further down the gulf's coast the wreck sites continue. In 25 feet near Tarpon Springs, a **Navy Hellcat** fighter plane remains fairly well preserved. Its engine and prop separated from the fuselage, it is a popular photo dive. Another airplane wreck, called the **Bomber Wing**, still has its wings, fuselage and all four engines relatively intact. Spadefish often swim along its metal surfaces.

In 78 feet, an ocean-going tug lies upside down. One hundred five feet long, its gantry crane is trapped underneath and sticks 50 feet out to the side. The two barges it had in tow also sank and are just more than two miles away.

Near St. Petersburg and Clearwater, the ***Rube Allyn*** sits near the beach. A Navy LSM sunk as an artificial reef, it is in 50 feet. The water visibility here is not as good as in the Panhandle, but still ranges from 15 to 50 feet.

Twenty-four miles offshore, near Ft. Desoto, are two wrecks. The **Sulphur Barge** lies upside down in 75 feet. The remains of its cargo, black sulphur, are

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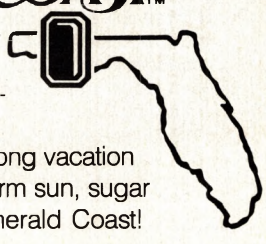
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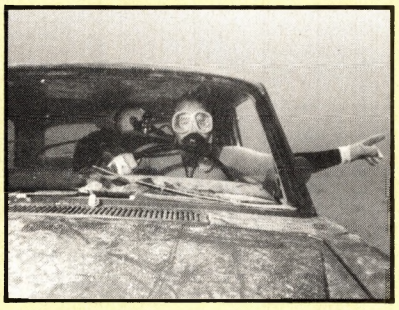
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photos/Marc Roman

ROLLS ROYCE REEF

BY J.D. DUFF

On September 23, 1985, a 1967 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow (in running condition) was sunk as an artificial reef off the coast of Palm Beach, Florida. The Rolls (valued at more than $25,000) was donated by Greg Hauptner, a local resident and businessman. Although the car will corrode away in a few years, it attracted much needed attention to the necessity for more artificial reefs.

The hood ornament, grill, emblems and hub caps were welded in place to prevent vandalism. In Florida, it is a federal offense to remove anything from an artificial reef.

The car is one mile offshore and one-half mile south of the Palm Beach/Lake Worth inlet in 80-85 feet of water.

FLORIDA

scattered over the seafloor. Nearby, the ***Gunsmoke***, a wooden and steel shrimp boat, was purposely sunk by its crew when the Coast Guard discovered it was carrying a large quantity of marijuana.

Thirty-seven miles out from Egmont Key, the barge ***Mexican Pride*** sits upright in 125 feet. Three hundred feet long, it is home to several large jewfish weighing as much as 300 to 500 pounds. Dark and silty, its insides are considered unsafe. Several large anchors, up to 20 feet in length, are still mounted on its side.

One of the most popular Tampa area wrecks, the Coast Guard buoy tender ***Blackthorn***, is 22 miles off Clearwater Pass. Now 78 feet down, it sank five years ago in Tampa Bay when struck by a freighter. More than 20 crewmen perished in the accident. Refloated and towed to its present site, it is home to large schools of jack, barracuda and an occasional jewfish. Baitfish are so common on the wreck they swim about in living clouds. The wreck cannot be entered safely and is rapidly deteriorating.

Near Bradenton and Venice, ledges similar to those found in the upper part of the gulf make popular dive sites. Large jewfish are sometimes found on the **Venice Ledges** as well as the wrecks of the **Barge** and **Hopper** and **Sugar Barge**. Thirty miles out in the gulf, the wreck of the ***Bayronto*** also called the *London*, is found in just more than 100 feet. Upside down and split in half, the ship sank in a 1919 hurricane while carrying a load of grain. Large schools of jack are often seen above her keel and jewfish up to nine feet long and weighing as much as 1,000 pounds are frequently spotted.

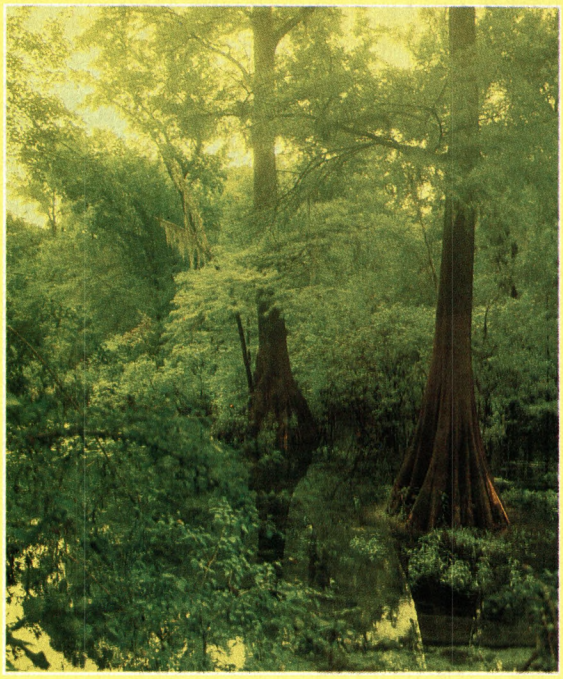
Just a few miles inland from the gulf, Florida's fresh water springs are hot, but very cool, on weekends, especially when the ocean is a bit rough. With exceptional visibilities sometimes measured in the hundreds of feet, they can be found scattered over a large portion of the state's upper region.

Morrison, near the Choctawatchee River in the Panhandle, is surrounded by large cypress trees. Sloping to a vertical drop, it has two cavern openings. Perpetually purified by a supply of fresh water from deep within the ground, either cavern is safe to enter as long as you remain in the natural light zone. Camping and basic dive facilities are on the site.

Nearby, **Vortex** is 50 feet deep at its cavern entrance. It can also be explored safely in the natural light areas. However, it, and all of Florida's cavern/cave systems should be avoided unless you are trained and certified in the special techniques required for this type of diving.

The best known springs in the state are probably those found in and around **Crystal River**. On U.S. 19 near Florida's





photos/Geri Murphy



Clockwise from above: Highrises on beach, Ft. Lauderdale. The glow of sunrise on cypress, Santa Fe River. A diver jumps off the *Pro Diver*. Topside activities include windsurfing on the Gold Coast. Pam Dickinson at Molasses Reef, Pennekamp.





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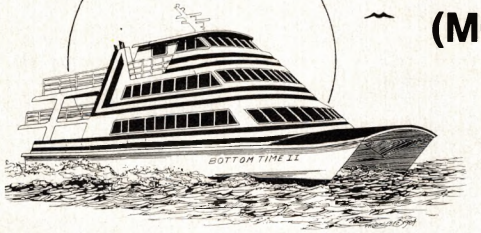
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west coast, the city is approximately halfway between Tampa and Gainsville. Equipped to handle virtually any number of divers, the city has an excellent assortment of dive operators and hotels that cater to the sport.

The West Indian manatee inhabits the area from November through April of each year. An endangered species, the animal seeks the abundant food and warmth of the 72°F water. Every year, the propellers of boats injure and kill many of the slow moving mammals.

While manatees are afraid of bubbles, they have no fear of snorkelers. Touching them is not recommended, however, and chasing them can result in a hefty fine.

Kings Spring is a fun site easily reached by renting a johnboat. Mullet surround the entrance and sunfish chase you around its basin. Divers swim to a depth of 30 feet where the system opens into a grotto. With only one way in and out, it is a safe way to experience cavern diving, but make sure you carry a light.

At Dunnellon, near Crystal River, the **Rainbow River** explodes through the sand. Requiring a boat to reach its mouth, the spring's head percolates through the river bottom causing the sand to boil. Only 16 feet deep in the center, the area is a freshwater aquarium with visibilities sometimes measured as high as 300 feet!

Eighty-five miles north of the Crystal River area, concentrated around the banks of the **Suwannee**, **Ichetucknee**, and **Santa Fe Rivers**, are a multitude of diveable springs. Some have as much as 100 million gallons of pure, fresh water flowing from their mouths daily. With several top quality dive operations in the area, some springs resemble giant Alka-Seltzers on the weekend.

An exciting aggregate of dive locations, they combine the thrill of clear water with a bit of Civil War and ancient archaeological artifact research. At **Troy Spring** the wreck of the river boat ***Madison*** lies scuttled at the spring's entrance to the Suwannee River. In the Santa Fe and Ichetucknee, divers often find relics of mastodons, camels, pythons and other prehistoric animals by simply fanning the sand away from the bottom or digging in the numerous crevices.

Over a dozen other springs can be found near the small city of Branford. Some of the most popular are **Royal**, **Yana**, **Peacock** and **Orange Grove**.

Clustered on the Santa Fe River, **Ginnie**, **Devil's Eye**, and **Devil's Ear** are among the most often dived in this part of Florida. Less than one-half hour off I-75 north of Gainsville, the springs are part of a private dive/camp park. Of the three, Ginnie is the largest with a massive cavern room through which millions of gal-

lons of fresh water flow each hour. Even with a large number of people in the spring, the water will return to near pristine clarity in only a few minutes.

Devil's Eye and Devil's Ear are normally used only by certified cavern and cave divers since each turns quickly into a treacherous cave system. The darker water of the river normally floats just above the entrance to the Ear causing the upper layers to be stained with a coffee-colored tannic dye.

Across the state, on the tropical Atlantic coastline from Palm Beach to Fort Lauderdale and Miami, the Gulf Stream sometimes sweeps its clear water all the way to shore. Reefs and shipwrecks are found at dozens of places all along the Gold Coast.

With its closeness, the stream often brings large animals very near shore. Loggerhead turtles with three or four foot long carapaces often glide out of the blue. Seeming to enjoy frolicking with divers, they may even swim right between dive buddies.

Near Palm Beach's shores, south to Boca Raton, the bottom is rich with color. Reefs such as the **Breakers**, **Trench**, **Lynn's** and **Paul's** seem to be painted with orange and red enamels. Starting in shallow water, they run in continuous ridges with depths averaging 60 to 80 feet. The coral rocks sometimes spring from the bottom to six and ten feet and most are encrusted with sponges.

The wreck of the ***Mizpah***, a rusted old Greek luxury yacht, sits upright with its bow aiming with the northward bound current. Her deck's storage holds serve as hiding spots for masses of fish and her superstructure is coated with seawhips.

A few yards away, the ***PC 11*** sits broken in half, her stern resembling little more than a barge. Just beyond, the gutted freighter ***Amarilys*** looks like an overgrown 300 foot canoe.

A new "wreck" was recently sunk off Palm Beach: a **Rolls Royce**. That's right: A real Rolls Royce automobile.

North of Palm Beach, between Fort Pierce and Stuart, two freighters sunk by the Germans sit on the bottom in relatively shallow water. The ***Amazon*** and ***Halsey*** were torpedoed on consecutive nights by stalking U-boats. After 40 years, each ship is completely overgrown. One hundred feet down, they are covered with thick marine carpets. Deep water game fish frequent the sites and are often taken by spearfishermen.

In Fort Lauderdale, the ridges are also full of life. **Barracuda** and **Hammerhead Reefs** are each south of the Port Everglades inlet, near the beaches of the John U. Lloyd State Park. Their tops are overgrown with lacy seafans and sponges. In depths of less than 20 feet to well over 60, they rise four to six feet from the sand and provide many hiding places for gray and blue angels and other tropicals.

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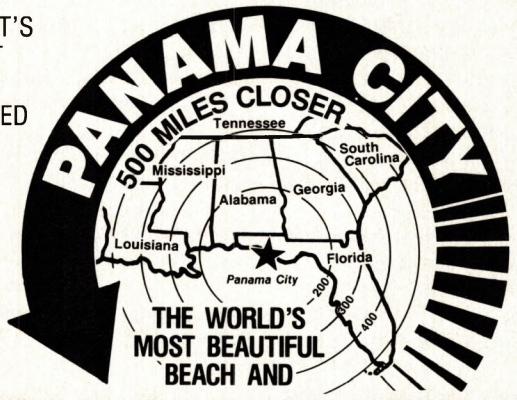
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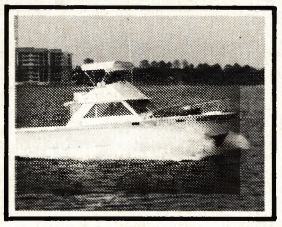
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than 30 feet, **Lobster Ledge** is very popular with aquatic hunters. Spiny lobster are frequently found and taken in season beneath the overhangs and in the holes on top of the shallow reef.

Fishers Pedestal is close by. Two large coral mounds sit on top of a coral ridge surrounded by sand. One has a long protruding overhang beneath which barracuda often wait to be cleaned by tiny blue gobies.

Lauderdale is quickly becoming a popular area for wreck divers. The wrecks of an **Old Houseboat**, the ***Trio Bravo*** and the ***Cumberland*** have long been favorites. The newest wrecks, the ***Mercedes*** and ***Rebel***, are large freighters.

The *Mercedes* has received more publicity than any other wreck on the Gold Coast. One hundred ninety-seven feet long, its stern sits in more than 90 feet, with the bow at 100 feet. A derelict, it was refloated after being grounded in Palm Beach. It was towed to Port Everglades and local dive organizations prepared it for sinking. Down almost a year, it sits adjacent to a low reef. Fish are finding it quickly and marine growth is becoming firmly attached.

The *Rebel* was sunk in the summer of 1985. One hundred-fifty feet long, it is in 110 feet of water with a depth of 85 feet at its deck.

Miami has the most active artificial reef program of any city in the state. Over a dozen large vessels and numerous smaller ones have been purposely sunk at predetermined sites by Dade County's department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM). Most are in depths of less than 100 feet making Miami the wreck diving capital of the U.S.

The ***Almirante*** is 200 feet long and 125 feet deep. Looking like a South Pacific wreck owing to its growth of soft corals, it is the most beautiful in the area.

The ***Blue Fire*** and ***Ultra Freeze*** are both large, upright freighters south of Key Biscayne near Fowey Light. Soft corals have begun to take over the railings and stairways of each. Large schools of silvery baitfish work their way from stern to bow on both.

In slightly more than 60 feet of water, the wreck of the ***Biscayne*** is 120 feet long and overgrown with lacy gorgonians. Thousands of grunts school alongside and jacks circle its decks.

In 80 feet of water, the freighter ***Proteus*** is almost 200 feet long. A massive prop at its stern was spared by the blast of the police bomb that sent it to the bottom. Its engine room is ripped open and the jagged metal makes the entrance a bit treacherous. Grunts swarm in tight groups at the stern using the hole created by the blast as their passageway.

In 100 feet, the 118 foot tug ***Orion*** has a ghostly appearance. The monarch of the Miami wreck fleet, it is second in popularity only to the *Biscayne* and is far more dramatic. With an enormous prop at its stern, the wreck displays the holes in its side where several charges of dynamite sent it to the bottom.

In 130 feet, the 200 foot ***Lakeland*** has rolled completely upside down since its sinking. Originally resting on her port side, the twin props now thrust upward. Soft corals cling to what was once a stark, barren hulk of metal.

North of the *Biscayne*, the yacht ***South Seas*** and the broken freighter ***Arida*** each sit on an underwater desert. A derelict once used as a floating bar, the *South Seas* gives little indication it was once the show place yacht of the Woolworth family. The 165 foot *Arida* is badly broken up and lies on its side. Not dived as frequently as many others, it has more fish than most.

In 135 feet, the ***Deep Freeze*** is one of the oldest of Miami's wrecks. It is 105 feet to its deck and the holds are stuffed with a living cargo of fish. Its bow completely covered with seafans, it is one of the most colorful of this ghost fleet.

Between Miami and the Keys, near Homestead, the Biscayne National Park is becoming an increasingly popular snorkeling location. Numerous reefs can be found inside its boundaries. **Pacific**, **Ajax**, **Long**, **Triumph** and **Star** are each populated with large corals.

The single most popular dive region in the state begins right at the bottom of the peninsula. The fringing reefs of **Key Largo**, **Islamorada**, **Marathon**, **Big Pine** and **Key West** are among the most spectacular in Florida. Giant heads of brain, staghorn, elkhorn and star corals join together to form barriers that protect the low islands making up the Florida Keys.

Strung like a row of coralline pearls, the Keys wind in a slow arch as they stretch toward their western end. Dive flags are such a commonly flown banner along U.S. 1, it could be considered the national flag of this Conch Republic. Although they are more than 100 miles long, you can easily find your way by using the local address system. Everyone gives his/her business location by referring to the mile posts that perpetually work their way toward zero. "Find us at Mile Marker 104.5." "We're right on U.S. 1 at marker 67!"

Many of the state's best known reefs are found within the boundaries of Pennekamp Park. At the northern boundary, **Carysfort** is marked by a tall steel lighthouse. The HMS *Carysfort* went aground here in 1770, but little remains above the sand. Rarely dived, except from private boats, it is lushly populated with extended arms of elkhorn and staghorn corals. Two coral bands form the reef. The first reaches almost to the surface and is the most frequently explored. The second, 100 or so feet away, rises from a wide sandy floor to within 35 feet of the surface. Many schools of fish can be found in the area. Unlike their cousins at other Pennekamp reefs, they are less friendly and do not rush toward every diver who swims by.

A few miles south, **Elbow** is also marked by a steel tower. One of the three most popular formations in the park, it is in the shape of a boomerang or bent elbow. Several wrecks, including a cannon from a **"mysterious" galleon**, are scattered among the corals. They include the ***City of Washington*** and one called the **Civil War Wreck**. Several large green moray eels live among the rubble and metal and have been known to swim directly between your legs when approaching you from behind! They are definitely not aggressive, although caution is certainly suggested whenever they seek you out. Accustomed to being handfed, they are the pets of several experienced dive operators in Key Largo. The "mysterious" cannon was actually dragged to the spot by dive operators in the mid 1970s.

The site that is most often associated with the park is the **Christ of the Abyss**. Donated to American divers by Egidi Cressi of the Italian dive equipment company that bears his name, the nine foot bronze statue is in an area known as Key Largo Dry Rocks. In 25 feet, its arms stretch to within 10 feet of the surface. A popular snorkeling spot, it has many fish in the corals that surround its base. Several of the Keys' largest brain coral heads can be seen nearby.

The wreck of the ***Benwood*** is another World War II wreck site. In depths as shallow as 25 feet, down to almost 50, it was torpedoed by a German U-boat, rammed by a second boat, sank at its present site and then was bombed by the military as a navigational hazard before finally becoming the most loved wreck in Florida. She is 300 feet long and little remains of her other than her keel and ribs. Lobster are sometimes found in the metal and large schools of fish work their way along her heavily encrusted sides. The ship's anchor can be found at about 60 feet, lying near a ridge off the bow.

Grecian Rocks is one of the most popular snorkeling reefs in the park. Surrounded by sand and grass, it is shallow with a maximum depth of about 25 feet. Large star corals come near the surface. If you are very observant, you may even find another old cannon hidden in one of the larger star corals.

At **French Reef**, be prepared for some cave diving. Actually open ended tunnels through the coral, many can be found scattered throughout the large reef. Inside, sweepers swim in unison, looking like a living sheet of copper. Fish, especially yellowtails, are overly friendly at this spot and expect to be fed. Bring some

ballyhoo or other baitfish that can be purchased at almost any convenience store. Wear gloves, these fish have sharp little teeth and frequently do not make a distinction between bait and fingers!

Molasses is probably the most popular reef in Pennekamp. A large reef, it is constructed of many different corals. You can move a few hundred feet away from your present site and find yourself on what appears to be a totally different reef. The northern end is primarily used by snorkelers and glassbottom boats, while the area near the steel tower is more popular with dive boat operators. **Hole in the Wall** and **Winch** are frequently among the first places divers experience when learning scuba.

Gaining its name from a barge that once carried molasses and went aground at this spot, the reef is made up of many tall star corals. The peaks of older coral rocks are topped with regal stands of elkhorn. Staghorn grows near the surface in the shallower areas. To the south, an old galleon anchor lies stretched across the coral with tall walls of sponge covered coral standing nearby.

Two miles southwest, outside the park boundary, **Pickles** comes to within 10 feet of the surface with average depths of 25 feet. Many small critters live here, making it an ideal spot for photographers equipped with a macro lens or extension tubes. Queen conch are found in the area, but as of June 1985, it is illegal to collect or possess them in state waters.

Another star coral reef, **Hens and Chickens**, is similar to Pickles in depth. A thick growth of soft corals can be found in the area and schooling spadefish are commonly seen.

Crocker Reef is a sloping coral cliff with a drop of about 25 feet. Depths reach 50 feet plus before dropping almost vertically to 80. Turtles, groupers and other large marine animals may be seen, along with a large collection of seafans and deep water gorgonians.

The ***Cannabis Cruiser*** sits upright on 110 feet of sandy seafloor. An ocean going tug loaded wth marijuana, it was apparently scuttled by its crew. Groupers, jacks and other fish swim about and the soggy contraband is still in its holds.

Near Marathon's Seven Mile Bridge, **Sombrero Reef** is next to a tall lighthouse. The most popular reef in the Middle Keys, it has many gullies and canyons running like mazes through enormous stands of brain, elkhorn and staghorn corals. Even the rare, spire like pillar coral can be found on this reef and others nearby. Large barracuda are found under the overhangs, and spotted moray eels stick their heads out of hundreds of reef cracks. Cleaning stations are commonly found where large groupers fan their gills to allow tiny cleaner shrimp and gobies to pick out the parasites.

Nearby, **Delta Shoals** begins in shallow water and ends up in more than 100 feet. Primarily a low profile reef, barrel sponges and gorgonians can be found throughout its reach. In the shallows, conchs and other shells are often seen.

The rubble from the old **Seven Mile Bridge**, recently replaced by a newer structure, can be located in depths ranging from 40 feet to more than 100. Although not as attractive as the natural reefs, it is home to many fish and invertebrates, including spiny oysters.

Looe Key, near Big Pine, is one of the best reefs in the Lower Keys. Named for the HMS *Looe*, a frigate that went on the rocks in the mid 1700s, it is hardly an island today. At the lowest of low tides, a small sandy patch may come out of water. At the time the *Looe* sank, an island did exist. The reef extends from a very shallow grass flat to depths of well over 100 feet. It is a marine sanctuary and collecting and spearing is prohibited. In the more than five years it has been protected, its fish populations have increased greatly, adding to the natural beauty of the corals.

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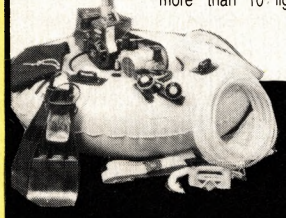
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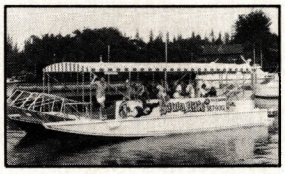
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FLORIDA

islands is one called **Sand Key**. With depths ranging from less than 10 to well over 65 feet, the reef is marked by a lighthouse sitting atop a small cay made up of ground shells and coral. Consisting of gullies and fingers running through large areas of staghorn and elkhorn coral, the reef is alive with another type of coral, of which divers will want to be especially aware—fire coral. Its sting can be anything from a nuisance to very painful depending on the type of coral and your particular reaction to the toxin.

Rock Key and **Eastern Dry Rocks** are great places to fan the sand looking for an old wreck artifact. Ballast stones, quartz, brass spikes and cannon balls are sometimes found by divers willing to spend the time fanning away sand.

Western Dry Rocks drops to depths of well over 100 feet and is pocked with open ended caves similar to those found in Pennekamp. This is a popular spot to see sharks. Depending on the time of the year, as many as two to three dozen blacktip, bull and lemon sharks may be seen cruising above the bottom.

A new wreck, the ***Cayman Salvage Master***, now rests near Key West. Sunk more by accident than design, the 186 foot long ship sits on the sand in 90 feet of water with its top at 50 feet. It was originally to be towed to water more than 200 feet deep and sunk as a fishing reef, but by a stroke of good fortune—for divers—it sank in the wrong place.

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GOURMET DIVER

(Continued from Page 54)

mediately. Cut the wings away, running the knife as close to the body as you can. Keep the wings. Toss the rest overboard. Now, slice the wings into narrow strips. Remove the skin from the strips, then cut the flesh away from the cartilage in the centers. This will leave you two narrow fillets per original strip. Most skate relishers cut these strips into small cubes, rinse them thoroughly, refrigerate and get out their cookbooks.

That New England seafood restaurants, especially the less elegant "eateries," are often suspected of serving diced skate in place of scallops, will give you an idea of how to cook your catch and a notion of what to expect for taste. Virtually any scallop recipe will do and certainly your experiments in the kitchen, if thoughtfully performed, are likely to lead to new and tasty inventions. The possibilities are almost endless and it's best and most fun to discover or create your own favorite dishes. Skates are accessible on both coasts, easy to clean and forgiving of culinary trangressions. The next time you're diving for dinner, try out one of these ugly critters and skate your way to dining success.

DBI DIRECTOR

Dive Buddies International has appointed George Stateham as director. George is a PADI instructor with diving experience around the world. Founder and past director Les Urich is an oceanographer in Tacoma, Washington.

DBI is a non-profit organization for divers to share information, advice and help to those from other areas. DBI currently has members in 17 countries.

Divers interested in joining should write to: Dive Buddies International, 2215 Jonquil Place, Rockford, IL 61107.

PHOTO SEMINAR

An Underwater Photography Seminar sponsored by Nikon, Inc. and Oceanic U.S.A. will be given by Al Huelga and Steve Rosenberg at the Galapago Inn in Cozumel during the week of April 19 to 26. The seminar will include a review of the basic principles of underwater photography; use of macro, normal and wide angle lenses; lighting; use of TTL strobes; fish photography and composition.

Participants must bring their own equipment. NAUI or PADI Underwater Photography Specialty Certification is included. For more information contact: Al Huelga at (408) 375-1933 or Steve Rosenberg (415) 276-5694, or write c/o The Aquarius Dive Shop, 2240 Del Monte Blvd., Monterey, CA 93940.

WORLD TREASURE NEWS

Fisher Research Laboratory recently published its latest edition of the Fisher World Treasure News. The 12 page newspaper style format features the use of land and underwater metal detectors by treasure hunters in the United States and other countries. Articles include profiles of successful treasure hunters, how to search in shallow water, recent valuable finds and a special section.

According to the publisher's statement, the Treasure News is " . . . published every now and then and distributed free to anyone who wants one." Write to Fisher, Dept. SD, 1005 I Street, Los Banos, CA 93635 for a free copy.

ADOPT AN AB

Divers Down Dive Club will host its Second Annual Adopt an Ab program January 18, 24 and 25. Activities will commence on the 18th with a tour of the Port Hueneme, California abalone lab. On the 24th divers will plant baby abalone on the ocean bottom at La Jannelle Park in Ventura County. On the 25th the *Captain Midnight* will travel to Santa Cruz Island, where more abalone will be planted.

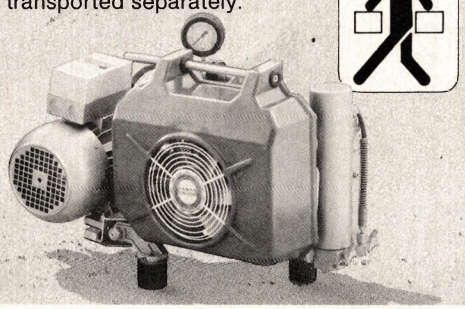
The cost of the program is $55 and includes 20 juvenile abalone, Adopt an Ab T-shirt, ab lab tour and the dive boat trip.

For more information contact Aquatics of Port Huenene, CA at (805) 984-DIVE.

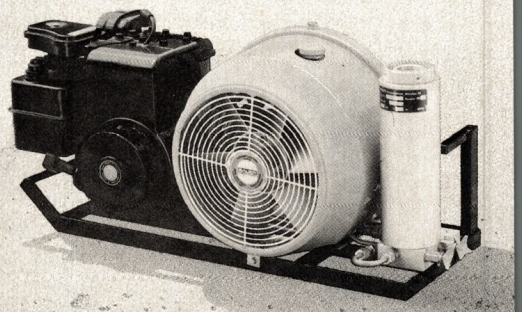
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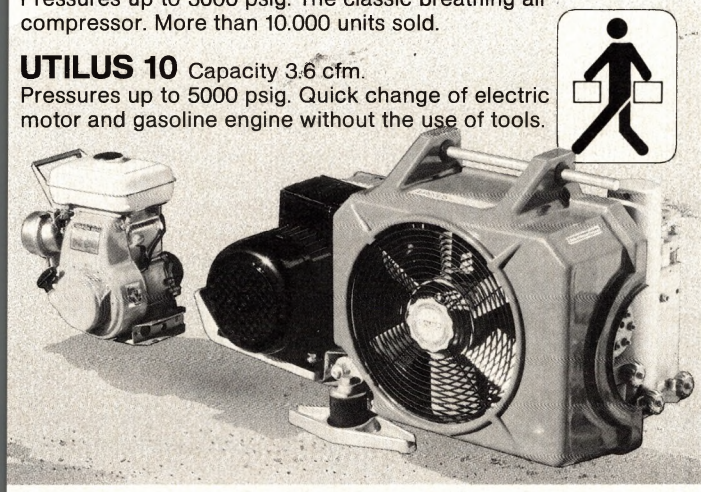
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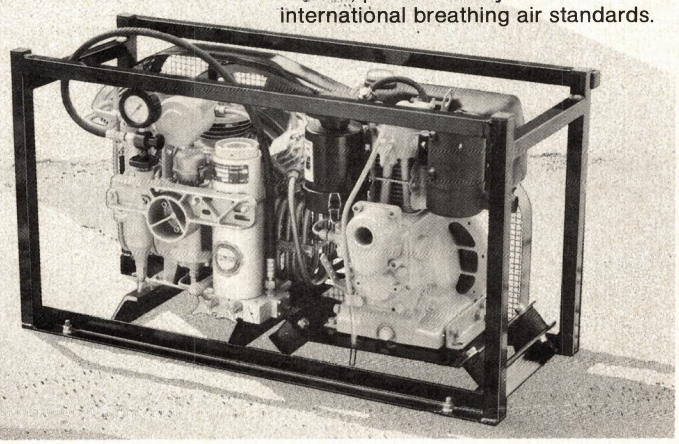
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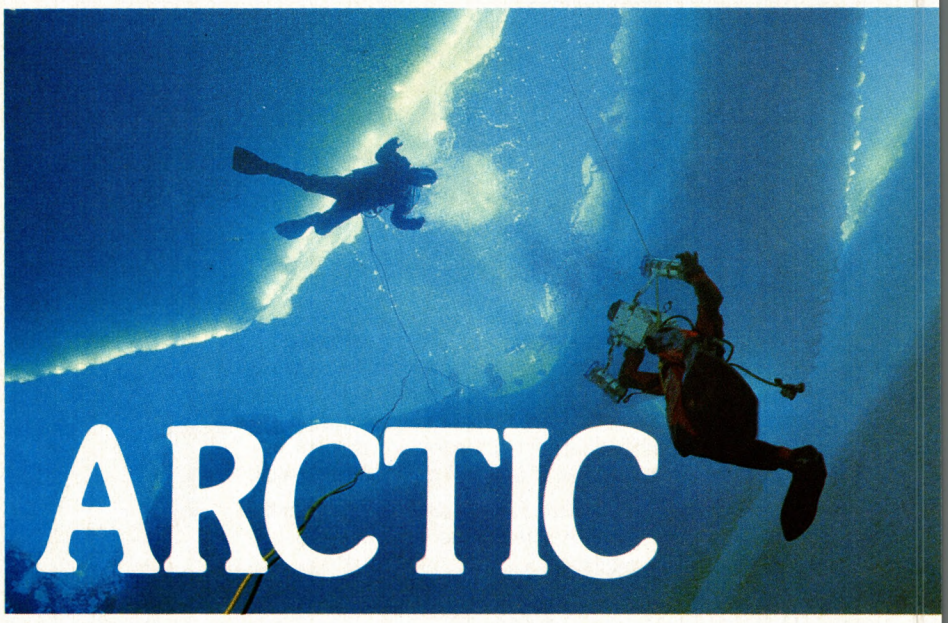
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ARCTIC SCUBA SAFARI

The Ultimate Ice Dive

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN ENGLANDER

Resolute Bay, NW Territories; 3,600 miles north of Freeport, Grand Bahama Island: The Eskimos were curious. Why would men want to drill a hole through nine feet of ice and jump in it? Amoshi, our lead guide, asked the question as he cleared the floating ice from the hole with a shovel. I didn't answer him, my mind on the water or more specifically on the seals of my drysuit. At 29°F, the water was colder than the ice chunks Amoshi dropped by me.

"Ready?" asked Barry over the communication gear. The moment of truth was now. "Ready" I replied, trying to sound confident. A little after 9:00 pm in the 24 hour daylight at the Top of the Earth we began to sink. We were just offshore, tethered to the ice ceiling, floating over a dark pebbled bottom with numerous sea urchins, starfish and snails. Though our only light was sunlight filtered through the thick ice ceiling, the water was air-clear and bright enough to highlight freshwater stalactites hanging from the ceiling 100 feet from us. Amoshi, hanging over the lip of the hole above us was even easier to pick out. His hand held my tether as a man line fishes. Why did I jump in the hole? Yes, UNEXSO was scouting unusual diving adventures, and yes the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was filming us as part of a special on unusual vacations. But the adrenaline coursing through my system betrayed the real reason: On this fourth day of our two week odyssey, I was having a truly electric experience.

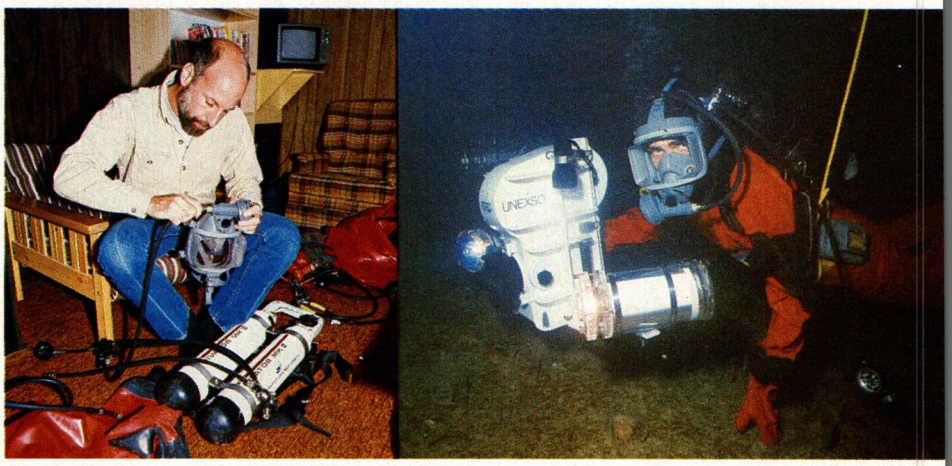
Barry Taylor, a director of UNEXSO (Underwater Explorers Society), and I had left Grand Bahama on Friday. After three days of equipment fitting and planning in Toronto, we flew to the Canadian High Arctic. The town of Resolute Bay is the base camp for most North American operations here. The next day we had driven snowmobiles to our first dive site, this three foot diameter hole in the ice. In some ways Barry was better prepared for ice diving than I, since he is a highly experienced cave diver. But the coldest water he had ever been in was 68°F.

The UNEXSO expedition of ten included our four guides and the television crew. After a few dives in Resolute Bay we flew by chartered Twin Otter to the northernmost settlement in Canada or Alaska, Grise Fiord. In the air, we saw that flying in this part of the world is different. The copilot used a solar compass mounted on the windscreen to fix our position. At less than 100 miles from the magnetic north pole traditional compasses would be useless.

Only 80 Inuit Eskimos live in Grise fiord, a settlement of perhaps 30 houses clustered at the base of some large hills. It is a desolate community in many ways. The Inuits have not been graced by contact with our version of civilization. Their own strong but fragile culture has often been virtually overrun by ours. Grise Fiord is littered with rotting carcasses, seals dropped where they were skinned, empty food and fuel containers and other refuse. Virtually the entire community is on welfare.

They remain a friendly and bright people despite the problems our culture has brought. Still experienced at long journeys across the virtually barren Arctic spaces, three Inuit Eskimo guides traveled with us from Grise Fiord back to Resolute Bay, a distance of 400 km. The journey took five days. Sometimes the ice cover was compact and smooth enough for our caravan of six snowmobiles and sleds to travel over 40 km per hour. At other points, icebergs and broken ice were so jagged we barely covered 100 yards in an hour. Once we traveled 40 hours without sleep.

During the entire five day journey over frozen Jones Sound and Devon Island we encountered only three people; an Eskimo family who seemed to welcome the opportunity to stop and talk with our



photo/courtesy UNEXSO

The UNEXSO expedition to the Canadian High Arctic made ice dives less than 100 miles from the magnetic north pole. Above left: John Englander examines a full facemask. Above right: The expedition was filmed for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

guides in the native tongue, Inuktitut. On Jones Sound, halfway between Ellesmere and Devon Islands, we made a dive that showed how really exotic our location was: My dive compass pointed *south*. We were actually north of the magnetic north pole, approximately 890 miles south of the geographic north pole.

We stopped often for hot tea and food during the snowmobile phase of our expedition. Spectacular icebergs towered hundreds of feet above us, frozen in sea ice, monuments of brilliant white and a rich light blue. In many places the sea ice had developed cracks, called leads, ranging from inches in width to more than 10 feet. The leads really determined the direction of our journey, like traveling through a maze.

Paul Mockler, a member of UNEXSO's board of governors and the CBC's underwater photographer for our expedition, nearly lost all his footage when one of the sleds and snowmobiles crashed through a lead into the water. Snowmobiles have virtually replaced dog teams in the Arctic and seemed to be treated better than the occasional Arctic husky we encountered. The drowned snowmobile was completely field-stripped by the Eskimos on the ice in an attempt to get it running. Unfortunately the magneto could not be repaired. The machine was carefully loaded onto one of the sleds for its journey back to Resolute Bay.

As we rode and, at times pushed, our sleds and snowmobiles, the creatures of the High Arctic became known to us. Seals, especially the smallest ones, showed no fear of man, a sad reality for them. Across the miles of ice a network of seal holes kept open by the animals allows them to get necessary food from the sea and return above for oxygen and rest. Bloody skulls near some of the holes told the story of polar bears lying in wait for the seals to return. A single swipe from the mighty paw of the bear spells the end for the seal as it exits the water.

At up to 1,200 pounds the majestic yet dangerous polar bears consider man a natural prey and have been known to literally stalk a man, waiting for that one unguarded moment. The ammunition frequently used as protection against the bears are 12 gauge shotgun shells loaded with a rifled, massive solid lead slug. Our ever present guides with their rifles gave us welcome security.

Able to camouflage themselves against the background of jagged ice, these bears can move swiftly and barely slow down when they come to open water or leads in the ice. Entering the water with a big splash, these powerful swimmers proceed quickly, climbing their way back up onto the ice and continuing at their fast, loping pace.

At 2:00 pm on our ninth day out, Paul and I experienced their speed and the very real terror it brings to humans. A smaller bear—probably weighing only 700 pounds and standing seven feet—charged toward us as we set up our cameras far away from the rest of the group. In less than 30 seconds the creature seemed to grow from a speck on the horizon to a giant, galloping directly toward us. Our snowmobile was shut down with the loaded shotgun between us, while Paul took movie footage and I used the zoom lens on a Nikon. Apparently both of us were mesmerized by the incredible photography before we realized we had adjusted our lenses to wide angle to keep the bear from filling the frame. As we both grabbed for the single shotgun the bear unaccountably veered off.

When we regained control of ourselves, we measured off the distance from where we had stood to the very distinct bear tracks. Only 19 feet remained between his position and ours. The footprints in the snow from my size 12 Arctic boot were somewhat smaller than his.

For this exploratory trip our equipment worked extremely well. During the two weeks we made four different ice dives using the Viking drysuits, Aga-Divator full facemask breathing systems and OTS communications gear. Essentially we stayed dry during the dives and were no colder than one gets while skiing. As important, we tested ourselves as well as

(Continued on Page 102)

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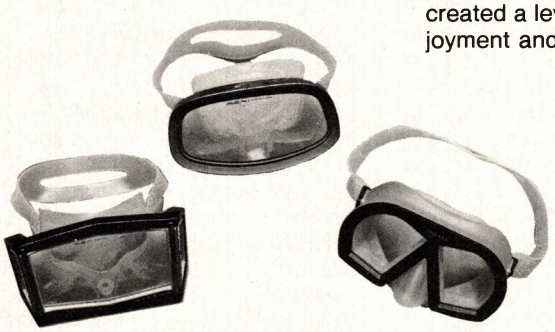
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travel SECTION

BONNE TERRE MINE An Underground "Sea"



Bonne Terre's dock is a complete support platform and focal point of activity.



The Goergens inside the mansion.



A diver examines mule footwear.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICK FREHSEE

This is an adventure I would have missed if it weren't for a backstage conversation with Jean-Michel Cousteau. His Calypso divers had recently filmed Bonne Terre Mine for a segment in the Cousteau/Mississippi TV Adventure. I was soon to be involved in an exciting "journey to the center of the earth."

Bonne Terre Mine is 62 miles south of St. Louis, Missouri in the historic little mining town of the same name—in the heart of the Midwest's old lead belt. Certainly not in the heart of scuba country, Bonne Terre has, in five short years, become a major American scuba attraction. It now surpasses every major single dive resort in the Caribbean in numbers of individual diver visits per year (7,000-8,000 estimated in 1986). And, it's currently open only on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Any other observation between Bonne Terre and the Caribbean (or any other dive destination for that matter) is like comparing apples to oranges. Although lacking in coral or tropical temperatures, it has its own special atmosphere and appeal, which set it apart from any other place in the world. Bonne Terre has that special something that lingers long after the diving is done. It has relevance, distinction and considerable historical interest because of the submerged relics of a recent industrial past. It has piercing, luminous, sometimes ghostly, light illuminating great underwater vistas, canyons and tunnels (the visibility is an almost constant 80 feet plus). It has scores of great earthen pillars, many over 200 feet tall; more than 35 miles of submerged railroad tracks; and more than 17 miles of navigable waterways; all set into a monstrous labyrinth that surpasses the imagination. These immense man-made caverns, the largest in the world, rival the greatest known natural caverns in size and spectacle. Along the underwater trails are hundreds of interesting tools and utensils ranging from ore carts to hydraulic drills, shovels and pipe wrenches to dishes and silverware used by thousands of miners who once spent the majority of their daytime lives toiling there.

Underwater, Bonne Terre is a submerged time capsule that allows us to discover our American heritage. Each dive is like entering a giant ship or submerged town. Each room offers us another look at Americana and the lives of our forefathers and ancestors during and after the industrial revolution. This historic aspect is seductive and thought provoking, but is perhaps secondary to the immediate physical thrills of diving through Bonne Terre's mind boggling dimensions. A map of the diving area reveals the size of the major amphitheater. There are many

BONNE TERRE

yellow dots, each representing a huge pillar, perhaps 50 feet in diameter and over 100 feet tall, stretching to the smooth ceiling above.

Bonne Terre is not cave diving and is mostly not even cavern diving. Imagine Carlsbad caverns half-filled with cool clear water. The other half, above water, is an almost continuous air chamber. The dozen trails mapped for divers allow you to surface in the air chamber, if necessary. Some natural light filters from a few overhead shafts penetrating from above, but the ambient light is not enough for good viewing or photography. So, there are powerful, 1,000 watt sodium lights installed on pillars and cavern walls. There are more than 60 lights on a dual-circuit system and virtually every foot of the dive trail is lighted. Visitors do not carry hand lights and are thus prevented from exploring off the designated trails. All tours are guided and divers progress from simple to more complex trails.

For a place to be considered a primary destination for divers it has to have more than mystique. It has to be self-contained with a great resort, a professional crew and a complete support station. It took considerable guts, dedication and enterprise to ready Bonne Terre for serious recreational activity. Just the dimensions alone are overwhelming.

The dream and the direction were provided by Doug and Cathy Goergens, owners of the West End Diving Centers in St. Louis, Missouri. Successful, with three dive stores, and longing for a completely different kind of resort for Midwest divers, the Goergens have made a complete commitment to the success of Bonne Terre. In my opinion, Doug and Cathy have created a masterpiece.

It starts with the support system that is complete and professional, highlighted by a pleasant, well-equipped dive shop on the mine premises (newly renovated this year). There is an extensive wooden support platform/deck (increased in size nearly 100 percent this year) on the underground lake. All tanks, fill stations, etc., are below ground for minimal equipment lugging. There is also one of the friendliest 20-30 (depending on the time of year) member instructor teams imaginable. Each person is interviewed and selected personally by the Goergens and is brought up in the "family" corporation to be an expert in the geography of the mine, safety and public relations. Non-team players are not tolerated here.

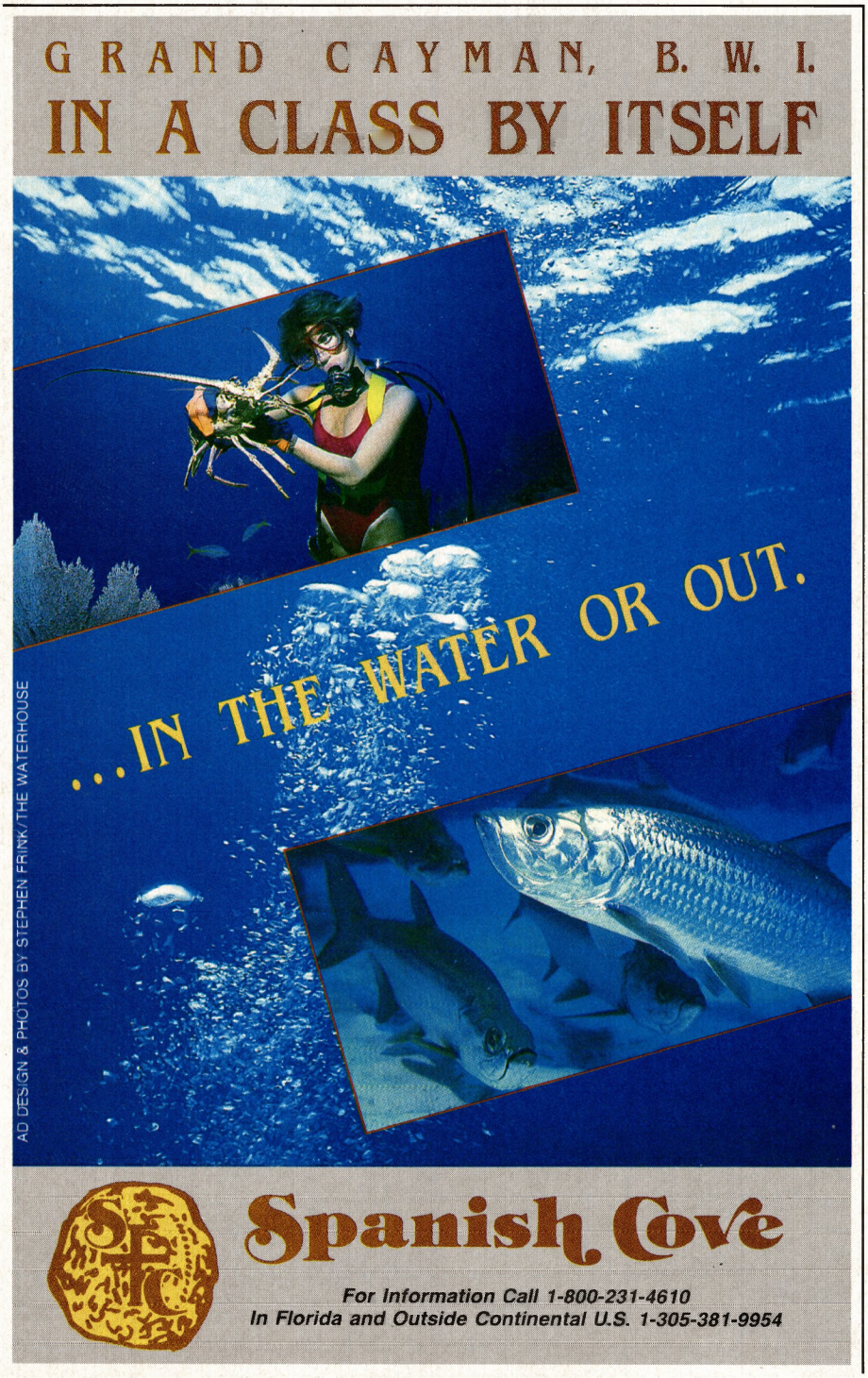


Housewarming at the Bonne Terre Mansion on the Hill. Historically, the 32 room mansion was used by the president of St. Joe Lead Mines to entertain VIPs. It has been fully renovated by the Goergens.

Lodging is provided at an on-premises lodge called the Park and Allan Bed and Breakfast (at the junction of Park and Allan streets) offering a convenient group package and a comfortable stay.

Lodging can also be arranged at the magnificent Mansion on the Hill—the crowning achievement of Doug and Cathy Goergens' quest for excellence at Bonne Terre. This 32 room mansion and historic site, former estate of the mine company, has been purchased and lovingly renovated and redecorated by the Goergens. Cathy, in particular, has provided hundreds of hours of work and inspiration, creating a breathtaking ambience of fine antique and nautical furnishings. That Bonne Terre is different from

(Continued on Page 105)



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Caribbean Aquaculture

U/W Ranching In Paradise

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL BELLEVILLE

Few of the sun lotion-smeared tourists indulging in diversions on the Caribbean island of Providenciales are aware they are sharing their picture postcard paradise with a livestock farm. But that is what exists in a quiet, mangrove-rimmed cove on the other side of the island.

The livestock on Providenciales, about 95 miles north of Haiti, is not cattle or pigs but large marine snails, otherwise known as queen conch (*Strombus gigas*), a longtime staple of the island diet and of the regional economy.

The problem of the conch (pronounced to rhyme with bonk) is that it has been literally loved to death in the form of fritters, chowder and steak. Wild populations are decreasing, natural harvests are on an alarming decline, and the animal has been declared commercially endangered by the World Wildlife Federation.

The seafarming, or mariculture (the more specific, marine version of aquaculture), of the conch is a means of reversing that decline by coaxing the animal through the critical early stages of life within the protection of a hatchery and later growing it out in fenced underwater ranches until it is ready for harvest.

But mariculture, practiced with a cornucopia of species throughout the region, is more than a method of controlling life forms. According to its supporters, it has the potential to create an industry that, unlike much outside investment, doesn't exploit either people or the fragile marine environment of the Caribbean. To them, mariculture is more than just a way to reduce natural mortalities of 99.99 percent by controlling metamorphosis, eliminating predators and reducing disease. It's no wonder that dozens of pilot programs are already underway in the region and that commercial ventures like the conch farm are coming increasingly on-line.

Chuck Hesse, the American ocean engineer and marine biologist who masterminded the conch farm after six years of research on the animal in the Turks and Caicos Islands, says mariculture has the capacity to walk the thin line between rational environmental use and economic profit. "It's the perfect industry for the islands. It creates jobs for locals that don't diminish their self-respect. It provides a high protein food source and doesn't pollute the environment. In many cases, a healthy marine environment is all that the smaller islands have as a resource."

Others seem to agree. Even in the more heavily developed tourist islands such as the French Antilles, there is a growing emphasis on mariculture as an industry as well as simply a backyard

(Continued on Page 94)

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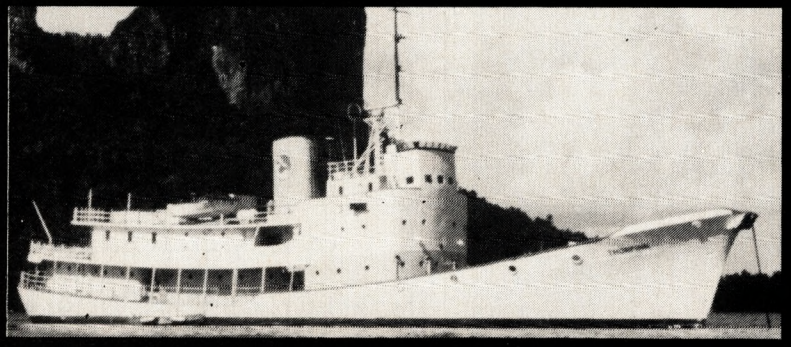
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Destination	Vessel/Port of Depart.	Accomm.	Amenities	Water Temp. & Visibility	Length of Trip & What is Included in Trip Price
Little Cayman	65' LITTLE CAYMAN DIVER (motoryacht) Cayman Brac	16 guests in 8 a/c doubles	Newly built especially for diving, fully air conditioned, every 2 cabins share adjoining showers/heads (total 4). Friendly crew of 5, sundeck, 2 compressors, air bank, diving platform, water maker and 2 dinghies.	82-86°F 100-200'	8 days (2 days travel), 6 days on boat. All meals, transfers & all diving services.
Micronesia	170' THORFINN (motoryacht) Ponape or Truk	26 guests in 13 a/c doubles	The comfort of a large ship with the informality of a private yacht. 13 a/c cabins, spacious salon, crew of 12, hot tub, 2 compressors, diving platform, water maker, support dinghies.	82-86°F 100-200'	12 days on board (plus travel time. approx. 3 days), first class accom. superb meals & diving services on board cruise. Extensions throughout Micronesia and South Pacific available.
Red Sea	85' FANTASEA (motoryacht) Eilat, Israel	12 guests in 5 doubles & 2 singles	5 congenial crew, a/c salon, spacious sundeck, 3 heads/showers, diving platform, compressor, air bank and 2 dinghies. Without contest, the most reliable and best boat in the area.	68-76°F 100-200'	14 days (2 days travel), 1 day Jerusalem, 1 day Cairo, 10 days on boat deluxe hotels, all meals first class, private touring throughout, foreign domestic flights, all diving services, private tour escort. Optional touring in Israel, Egypt & Europe extra.
Fiji	72' MOLLIE DEAN (motoryacht) Nadi or Suva	8 guests in 4 a/c doubles	Elegantly appointed with mahogany woodwork throughout. Fully a/c. Each cabin has private shower/head. Large salon & sundeck. Friendly crew of 5, 2 compressors, airbank, diving platform, water maker & 1 dinghy.	76-82°F 100-200'	15 days (3 days travel). 1 night deluxe accom. in Suva, 11 days on boat, all meals, all transfers and diving services. Private tour escort, Extensions to Australia, New Guinea or Fiji land-based diving in Taveuni available.
Papua New Guinea	65' TELITA (motoryacht) Madang, Rabaul, Milne Bay & Kimbe	10 guests in 5 a/c doubles	Newly built luxury yacht with experienced crew of 4. Fully a/c. 3 head/showers. Spacious salon and sundeck. 2 compressors, airbank, diving platform, special photography workbench, individual lockers, water maker, support dinghy.	84-90°F WARM WATER NO WETSUIT! 100-300'	16-17 days (3 days travel), 2 nights Sydney, 1-2 nights Port Moresby deluxe accom., 11 days on boat, all meals, transfers & diving services. Private tour escort. Extensions to highlands, Sepik River, Australia & Fiji available.
Eastern Australia CORAL SEA	79' CORALITA (motoryacht) Yeppoon or Townsville	12 guest in 4 a/c doubles & 2 a/c suites	Largest, most comfortable boat in area, with lively crew of 5. 4 showers/heads, large salon, diving platform, compressor, air bank, water maker & 2 dinghies.	76-82°F 100-200'	15 days (3 days travel), 1 night Sydney, 11 days on boat. Deluxe hotel, private touring, all meals, transfers and diving services. Private tour escort. Extensions to Australia, Fiji, New Zealand & New Guinea available.
Western Australia ROWLEY SHOALS	70' JODI ANNE (ketch) Broome	10 guests in 5 doubles	Luxurious private yacht, fully a/c, 4 crew, 3 heads/showers. Spacious salon & sundeck. Ample deck space. 2 compressors, 2 dinghies.	76-82°F 100-200'	16 days (3 days travel) 2 nights Perth, 11 days on boat. Deluxe accom., all meals, transfers and diving services, private tour escort. Extensions to Coral Sea, Australia, Fiji & New Guinea available.
Great White Shark	65' NENAD (motoryacht) Port Lincoln	6 guests in 3 cabins	Sturdy workboat perfect for manuevering one 2-man and two 3-man shark cages. 4 crew plus Rodney Fox, 2 heads/showers, salon, observation deck, compressor, 1 dinghy.	55-60°F 40-80'	12 days (3 days travel), 2 nights accom. in Port Lincoln, 7 days on boat, all meals & transfers. Diving services with Rodney Fox. Private tour escort. Extensions to Australia, Fiji & New Guinea available.
Maldives	70' RUSALKA (ketch) Male	8 guest in 4 doubles	Crew of 4, 3 heads & showers. Elegantly appointed pleasure boat with ample deck space. Support boat with crew of 3 carries 2 compressors, tanks & luggage.	76-82°F 100-200'	16 days (3 days travel), 2 night deluxe accom. in Singapore, 11 days on boat, all meals, transfers & diving services. Private tour escort. Extensions to Singapore & Europe available.
Galapagos Islands	70' ENCANTADA (staysail) Baltra	10 guests in 5 doubles	5 congenial crew & native naturalist, cabins w/fans, 2 showers, 2 compressors & 2 dinghies.	55-68°F 60-120'	17 days (2 days travel) 2 nights deluxe accom. in Quito, 13 full days on boat, all meals, transfers & diving services (with naturalist guide). Private tour escort. 10 day program available for charter for families and small groups.

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Diving Itinerary & Activity	Best Diving Season	Special Interest	Cost per Diver†	Charter Cost & Max. Guests	Sample Airfare*
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12 day voyage with diving (3-4 dives/day) from the beautiful walls of Ponape to the wrecks of Truk via the pristine atolls of Andema, Oroluk & Losap	operating Dec-April only	Rare opportunity to dive the wrecks of Truk; virgin and usually unreachable atolls of Micronesia and to experience the native culture of & visit the beautiful island of Ponape.	$2900	n/a 26 guests	$1288 from W. Coast
9 spectacular days of diving; 3-4 dives/day & night. World famous Ras Muhammed, Tiran Straits, DUNRAVEN wreck and more.	March-Nov	Rich, dramatic walls, caves & tunnels, brilliant soft and hard coral, multitude of pelagics, unique reef life, excellent snorkeling. A photographer's paradise.	$2800	$1700/night 12 guests	$700-900 from N.Y.
10 days unlimited diving, day & night. The Great Astrolabe Reef; rich & remote atoll of Navatu; Thakau Lekaleka Sea Mount and more.	April-Nov	Awesome dropoffs. Excellent growths of gorgonia & sea whips. Breathtaking soft coral, rich reef life. Endemic species. Photographers delight. Hospitable and charming locals in idyllic tropical backdrop of pristine beaches, warm breezes and cerulean waters.	$2500	$1200/night 9 guests	$843 from W. Coast
10 days of spectacular unlimited diving, day & night. Milne Bay, Hermit, Manus, Walindi, Hansa Bay, Rabaul, etc.	Year round Jan-Mar/ New Ireland: Apr-Jun/Madang Jul-Sept/New Britain: Oct-Dec/Milne Bay.	Adventuresome destination, mostly unexplored superb wall diving. Electrifying growths of hard & soft coral, huge sponges, unique tropical species. Very rich and abundant marine life. Great shark action. Madang & Rabaul—superb W.W. II Japanese & American wrecks. Opportunity for a completely different and amazing cultural experience.	$3200	$1800/night 10 guests	$1450-2100 from L.A./S.F.
10 days unlimited diving, day & night. Great Barrier Reef & Coral Sea. Marion, Lihou & Diamond reefs, YONGALA wreck & more.	Sept-Dec (Avail. other months of the year)	Largest barrier reef, richest ecosystem. Colorful walls & towering pinnacles of coral, array of soft coral, sharks, sea snakes, unique endemic fish. Awesome encounters with an abundance of fauna on the YONGALA. A photographer's playground.	$2800	$1700/night 12 guests	$1250-$1550 from W. Coast
10 days of unlimited diving, day & night. 170 miles west of Australia's west coast & the end of the Continental Shelf. Rowley Shoals atoll.	Aug-Sept only	Rollercoaster drift dives, 8 knot currents, mind bending walls, explosive & colorful coral growths. Large playful potato cod. The finest reef life, superb pelagics. Incomparable diving experience.	$3200	$1800/night 11 guests	$1500 from W. Coast
7 days of high diving adventure. 1 day with seals away from chum area. 6 days at Neptune & Dangerous Reefs filming and diving in safe cages.	Jan-Feb only	Fewer people have seen the Great White than been to the top of Everest. Face to face encounters with up to 19-foot whites, sometimes 3-4 at once. Rodney Fox is aboard to impart his expertise. Over two tons chum used to attract this remarkable animal.	$7000	n/a 6 guests	$1400 from W. Coast
10 days diving; 3-4 day. Remote & rich reefs. Lankan Finolhu Pass, Vadoo channel, Rihiveli lagoon, wreck of VICTORY & more.	Jan-May Oct-Dec	Virgin coral gardens, uninhabited atolls, endemic indo-pacific species, steep colorful drop offs & passages liberally spiced with pelagics, mantas & whale sharks. 1 day with Hervarth Voightmann; shark trainer. Superb photographic opportunities.	$2900	$1200/night 9 guests	$1500 from N.Y./ W. Coast
12 days of diving; 2-3 dives/ day. Unusual diving throughout archipelago at selected isles, Hood, Tower, Roca Rodunda and more.	Feb-Jun Aug-Sept (Avail. other months of the year)	Darwin's famous Enchanted Islands. Lava formations. Paradox: polar marine animals at the Equator: fur seals, penguins. Mantas, sharks, marines & land iguana, rare species, excellent snorkeling, great land exploration.	$3000	$1300/night 10 guests	$815 from Miami $915 from N.Y. $1060 from L.A.

†Program prices in effect January 1, 1986 through December 31, 1986

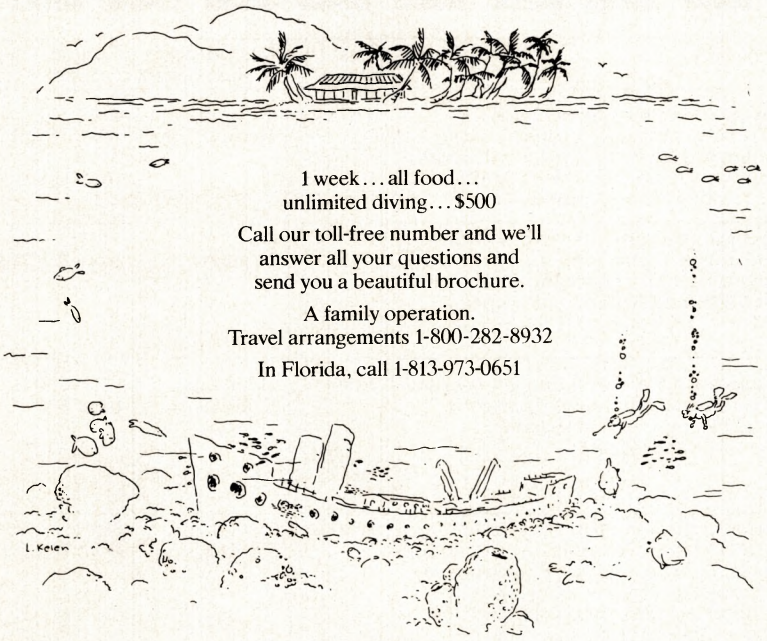
*Airfare not included in trip price. Airfares listed are samples only and subject to change without notice.

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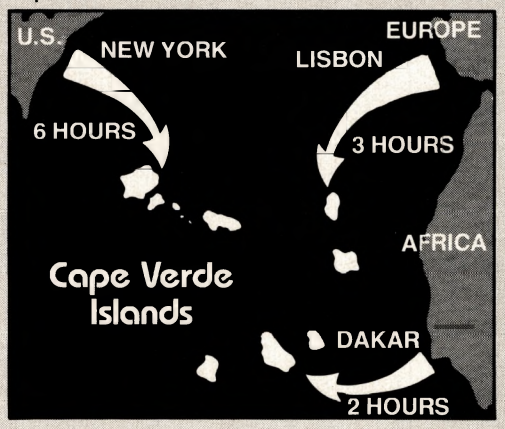
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CARIB AQUACULTURE

(Continued from Page 90)

source of protein for aquatic truck farmers. A government-run service (the Association for the Development of Aquaculture in Martinique) has been promoting fish farming on Guadeloupe and Martinique in the eastern Caribbean since the mid-1970s. That effort, which began with landowners digging their own freshwater ponds and stocking them with post-larval stock of the Malaysian prawns purchased from foreign hatcheries, has since evolved into a more comprehensive program using locally hatched prawns, diagnostic skills of extension biologists and other traditional farm bureau services. Over ten tons of prawns were harvested in 1984; twice that is expected this year.

In the Bahamas the government has even opened aquacultural ventures to duty free concessions on imported farming supplies and offers "attractive long-term lease arrangements" for fish farmers on government-owned land. According to fisheries director Ronald Thompson, the government's policy "is to promote aquaculture and offer as much assistance as it can to interested parties" In addition to earlier pilot work done with the queen conch, biologists working for Maritek Corporation now farm shrimp on some 20,000 water acres on Long Island, using juveniles from a St. Croix hatchery. And, on Freeport, British veterinarian Peter Bizzell has been converting the prolific freshwater Nile perch, or tilapia, to salt water, securing his charges in underwater cages.

Other enticements to fish farmers in the Caribbean include its proximity to the U.S. and available supplies, a tax-free or tax-reduced business climate and a virtual absence of regulatory agencies that, in some American states, would put aquaculturists through a multi-step approval process lasting up to two or three years.

But perhaps the most appealing factor in the region is what biologists call the "site specific" nature of much of the Caribbean basin. "It's like working in the middle of a saltwater aquarium," says Chuck Hesse. "It's a great deal easier to raise conch here than, say, in Hoboken, New Jersey." Hesse learned from earlier experience that one of the crucial needs of a conch farm is a readily available supply of fresh conch eggs. To that end, Hesse and biologist Megan Davis simply captured 100 male and 100 female conch and placed them in an underwater pen in their natural habitat at the base of a nearby coral reef. There, during the spring to fall spawning season, the mollusks breed at will, with the females producing several dozen egg masses of up to 500,000 eggs each a season. Native divers gingerly recover the masses from beneath the females and return them to

(Continued on Page 115)



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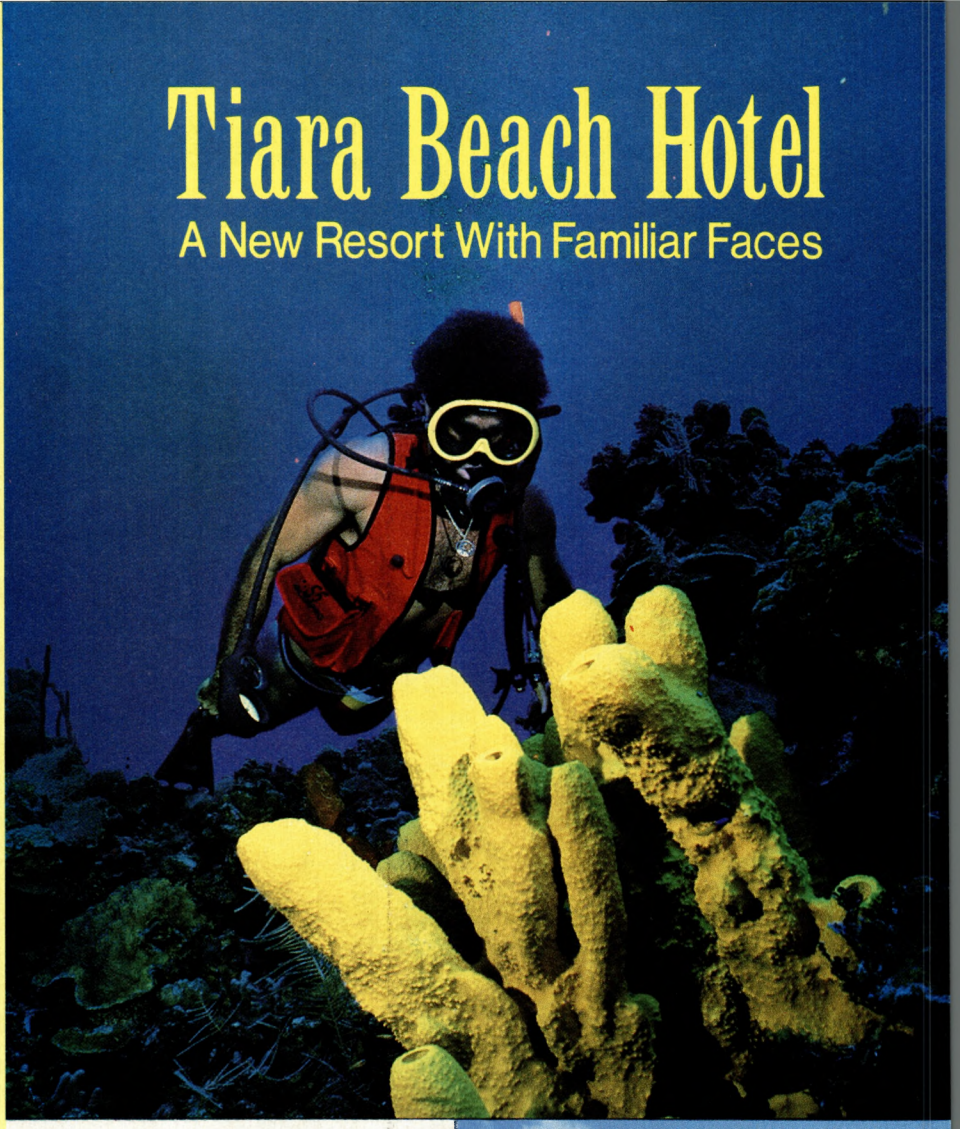
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Tiara Beach Hotel

A New Resort With Familiar Faces

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY







Top: Peter Hughes at Cemetery Wall. Above: Cayman Airways flies 727 jets direct to Cayman Brac. Right: The custom dive boat *Island Fever*.

When David Feinberg first said, "Come to the Brac," I was reluctant. We were standing on Grand Cayman's fabulous Seven Mile Beach, overlooking some of the finest diving sites in the Caribbean. More than one dozen dive boats had just departed, carrying their dive guests toward another spectacular wall diving experience. Why would I want to leave all of this? Yet, the twinkle in David's eye offered a hint of new diving adventures and an opportunity to sample one of the newest, and nicest, dive resorts in the Cayman Islands.

It never ceases to amaze me as to how the Divi Hotel Corporation continues to stay on the leading edge of dive resort development. The Flamingo Beach Hotel Bonaire is one of the great success stories of the industry and has become legendary among dive travelers throughout America. Peter Hughes' Dive Bonaire runs with the precision of a Swiss clock, while still providing that personal touch.

Now, Divi Corporation has launched a brand new dive resort, complete with a Peter Hughes scuba facility. They spared no expense in developing Tiara Beach as a premier dive resort. Many familiar faces have appeared. David Feinberg, former assistant manager at the Flamingo Beach Hotel, was appointed general manager of Tiara Beach. Craig Burns, former manager of Dive Bonaire, became the new manager of Dive Tiara. Colin Tozer, formerly from the Riding Rock Inn in San Salvador, became head divemaster. This is an impressive team of seasoned veterans.

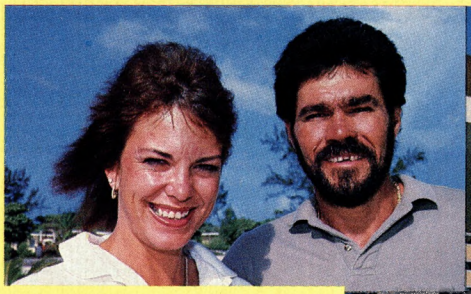
But first, a few words about the somewhat obscure island of Cayman Brac. While an estimated 55,000 scuba divers and snorkelers visit Grand Cayman annually, few make it to the Brac. It has remained virtually undiscovered, uncrowded and undeveloped for years.

Among the three Cayman Islands, the Brac is known as the middle sister. She is the second largest in size and the second most developed (when compared to Little Cayman). Cayman Brac is 86 miles northeast of Grand Cayman and about one mile east of Little Cayman. The island is 12 miles long and only one mile wide with a population of 1,700. Most of the island is low lying limestone with the highest elevation being 140 feet at the Bluff. Despite its small size and population, the Brac has a jet airport, well paved roads, several local villages and three hotels. The pace is slow and the people are both friendly and talkative.

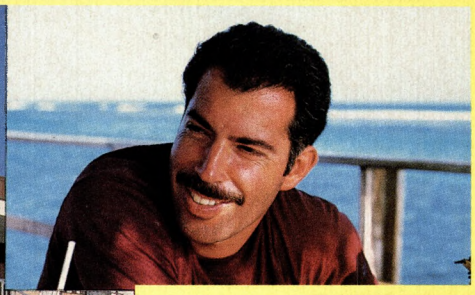
Cayman Brac is on the very edge of dive resort development. Visitors have an opportunity to experience untouched coral reefs, yet enjoy the creature comforts of an air-conditioned room, hot shower and a fine evening meal. The Brac lies midway between the frantic pace of Grand Cayman's hotel strip and the primitive wilderness of Little Cayman.

The Tiara Beach Hotel is on the south coast of Cayman Brac, close to the international airport. It has the classic setting for a tropical island resort. The hotel is fronted by 300 yards of white sand beach and overlooks a protected lagoon bordered by a fringing coral reef. It is ideal for swimming, sunbathing and snorkeling since the sea is always calm and the water only 10 feet deep. Much of the beach is naturally landscaped with two dozen palm trees and a giant cluster of seagrape trees. Guests have a choice of shade or sun, depending on the degree of suntan desired.

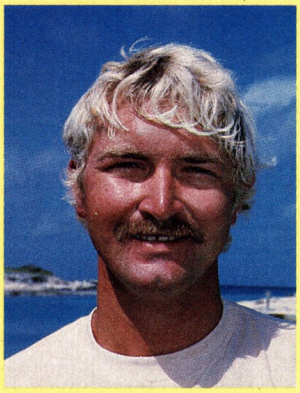
The Tiara Beach Hotel is a small resort with only 33 rooms. It offers an informal, friendly atmosphere where the entire staff knows your name by the third day. The resort can accommodate up to 66 people. David Feinberg has done a marvel-



Peter and Alice Hughes



David Feinberg



Colin Tozer



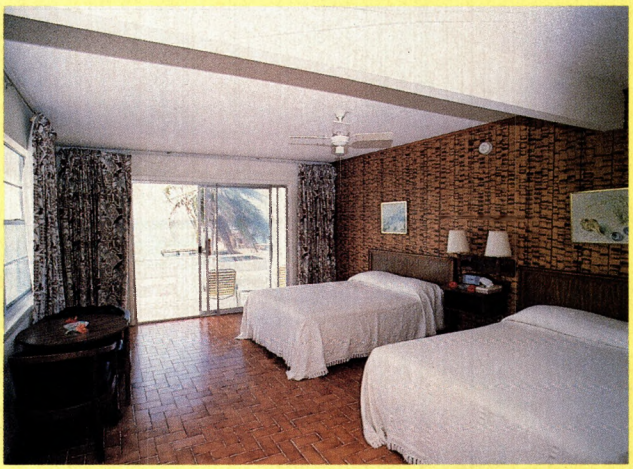
The Tiara Beach Hotel rooms are next door to the dive facility.



Craig Burns



Buffet breakfast at Tiara Beach



Air-conditioned Tiara Beach room

ous job of remodeling the hotel and adding those little touches that make the facility a true dive resort. For example, the dining room has been converted into an open air facility with a Polynesian decor. Woven palm mats and bamboo cover the ceiling and the walls are decorated with tapa cloth design wallpaper. There are ceiling fans to waft a gentle breeze and hanging green plants provide a freshness to the atmosphere. Three large saltwater aquariums and a number of turtle shells provide the feeling a diver yearns for.

In the center of the room there is a buffet counter for a quick, self-serve breakfast and lunch. No waiting for table service at this hotel! Yet the hotel chef is there at the buffet to serve custom ordered omelets, pancakes, French toast and other delectables. The food is absolutely superb, and the portions are more than generous.

The many facilities available at Tiara Beach include: a paved tennis court; freshwater swimming pool; Sunfish sailboats; windsurfers; paddleboards; and bicycles for touring the island. One of the most popular afternoon rituals is sitting at the end of Turtle Pier drinking fresh banana daiquiries and snacking on Cayman meat patties while the afternoon sun dips toward the horizon. The pier juts out into the lagoon and provides guests with an opportunity to view fish, rays and other friendly sea creatures cruising by.

The newest addition to Tiara Beach is the Peter Hughes Dive Tiara facility. This is a brand-new setup comprised of a dive boat pier complete with air fill station, two dive boats and a dive shop. The entire facility is just steps away from the hotel rooms. Designed by Peter himself, Dive Tiara features a giant 50 cfm Davy air compressor and 50,000 cubic feet of air storage. The operation has an inventory of 100 new aluminum rental tanks and plenty of scuba gear to go along with it.

Peter is especially proud of the two new boats. The 36 foot custom design (Peter's of course) *Island Fever* is powered by a Volvo Penta diesel. It is equipped with a large dive platform, twin dive ladders and a freshwater shower. This speedy monohull can carry up to 20 divers and make it from the Tiara Beach pier to Bloody Bay Wall (Little Cayman) in about one hour. It's both fast and dry. Most runs to nearby Cayman Brac sites take only 5 to 15 minutes. Peter's newest vessel, the *Ocean Fever*, is a 40 foot custom built dive boat that is even faster and roomier. It features twin Volvo diesels and an even bigger dive platform. It will make it to Bloody Bay Wall in 45 minutes and still carry 20 divers.

The routine at Tiara Beach is similar to

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TIARA BEACH

most professional dive resorts. The morning trip departs at 9:00 am and makes two dives at different reef sites. The first is a wall dive and the second is generally on a medium depth coral reef. The afternoon trip departs at 3:00 pm and is a one tank dive, returning in time for a shower and late afternoon cocktails. Night dives are conducted from shore (north side) and depart at 6:30 pm (winter schedule).

Perhaps the most pleasurable feature of Dive Tiara is the fact that guests never have to lift their scuba tanks. The divemasters load the tanks on board the boat and expertly rig everyone's regulator and BC jacket. Each diver is assisted in gearing up for the dive and the divemasters automatically switch to fresh tanks between dives. Best of all, you get all this service with a cheerful smile.

The diving around Cayman Brac is superb. Less than five percent of the island's reefs and drop-offs are ever visited, thus offering a marvelous opportunity to explore and experience virgin territory. Both the north side and the south side of the island are lined with stunning walls where visibility frequently exceeds 120 feet. The faces of these walls are etched with coral canyons, overhangs, caves and chimneys. The corals and marine growth are absolutely lush and the sponges come in brilliant hues.

The south side of the island, closest to the hotel, offers a wide variety of walls with such tantalizing names as Orange Canyon, Bat Cave Wall and Canyon Lands. My favorite is Anchor Canyon, a narrow winding crevice in which a giant anchor is wedged at a depth of 100 feet. The old anchor has obviously been there for many years, as it is now fused into the walls of the canyon. Beyond the anchor, the narrow canyon spills out onto the vertical face of the drop-off and affords a spectacular view of parading fish.

The north side of the island offers equally exciting diving. It only takes a few minutes longer to zip around the eastern point of the island. Wall dives along this side include West Chute, East Chute and Cemetery Wall. My favorite was Mystery Wall where I was able to photograph a large tiger grouper that had settled inside a giant barrel sponge at 80 feet.

The most impressive aspects of Cayman Brac's wall dives are the brilliantly colored tube sponges. Many of them are a highly reflective canary yellow that almost glows in the deep blue waters of the drop-off. To make things more interesting, some of these yellow sponges are interlaced with bright red finger sponges, producing a passionate mixture of colors. In all my years of diving Cayman I have only found these sponges in abundance at the Brac and Little Cayman.



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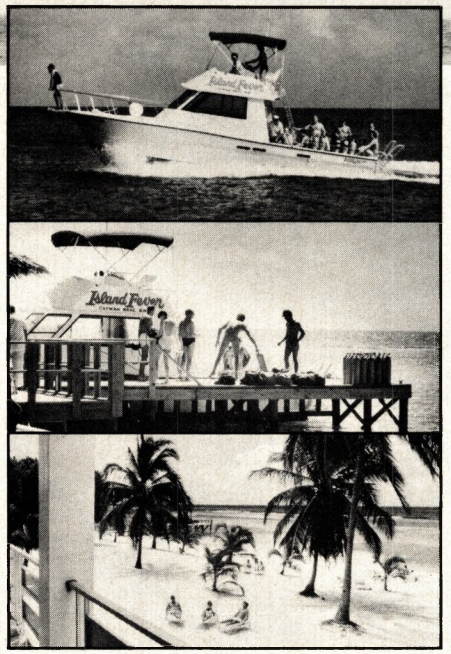
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TIARA BEACH

In addition to the north and south sides of Cayman Brac, Dive Tiara makes trips to Little Cayman at least once a week and sometimes twice. The most popular walls on the neighboring island are Bloody Bay and Jackson's Bight.

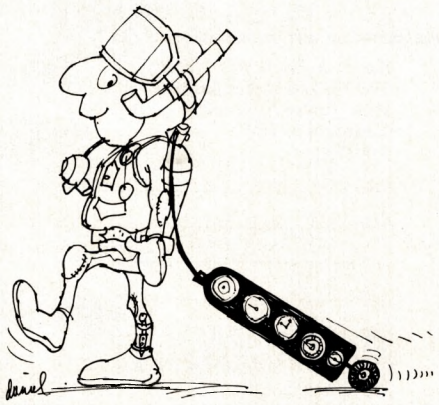
When the diving is over for the day, there are opportunities to explore the charm and culture of the island. The hotel offers a tour of island villages with stops at such colorful settlements as Watering Hole, The Creek and Spot Bay.

A visit to the Brac Museum provides an insight into the early history and lifestyle of these pioneers. No tour is complete without a stop at Eddie Scott's craftshop. Eddie is a true artist and expert sculptor in black coral, turtle shell and wood. His jewelry is some of the best in the islands. For those who like to hike and explore, there are many opportunities to visit legendary pirate caves and walk the trail along the Bluff.

Visiting Cayman Brac is a lot easier today than it was two years ago. The airport runway has been extended and widened to accommodate 727 jets. It is now an international airport with direct jet flights from Miami, Tampa and Grand Cayman several times a week.

In addition, Cayman Airways operates daily commuter service from Grand Cayman aboard its 17 passenger turbo prop Trislander. You can get in or out of Cayman Brac on almost any day of the week (except Tuesday).

Booking a vacation at the Tiara Beach Hotel is even easier. You can write or call the Divi Hotels Executive Offices, 520 West State Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. The U.S. toll free number is (800) 847-7198 and the New York toll free number is (800) 252-6323. If the toll free number is busy and you are anxious to get through, you can call (607) 277-3484.



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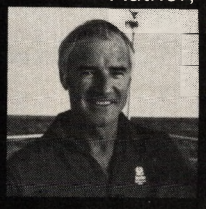
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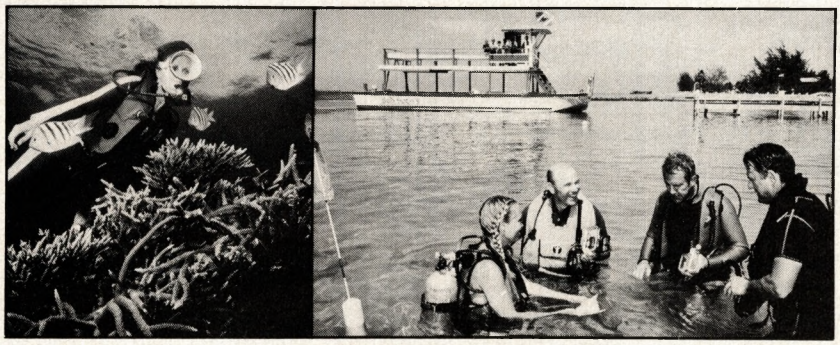
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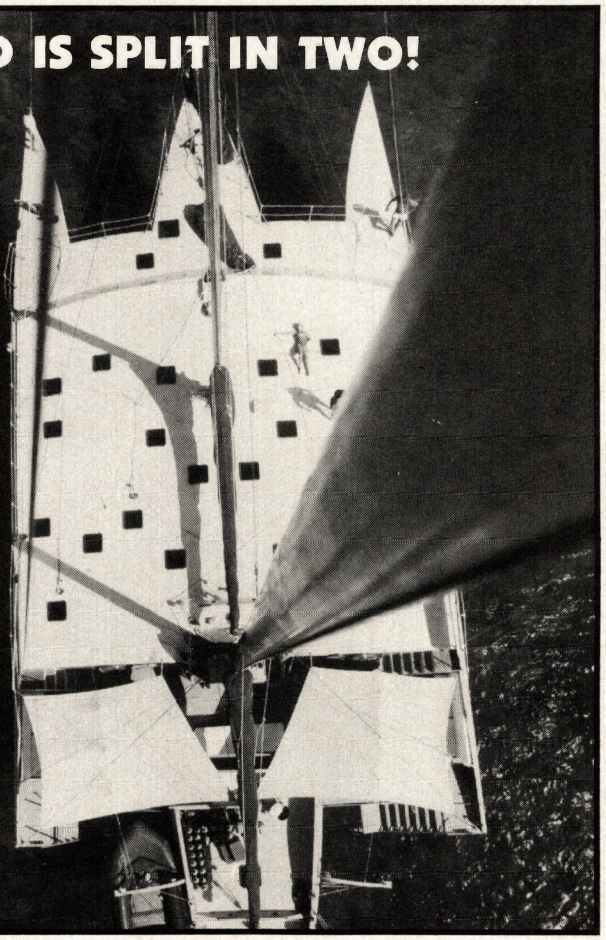
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The Bonaire program will include the basics of diving medicine and diving safety as well as cold water survival and hypothermia protection. The academic staff will include Jefferson Davis, M.D., director of Hyperbaric Medicine at Southwest Texas Methodist Hospital in San Antonio, Texas; Richard D. Heimbach, M.D., Ph.D., staff physician at the Hyperbaric Medicine Department in San Antonio; Glen Egstrom, Ph.D., a professor at UCLA and Martin J. Nemiroff, M.D., a captain in the U.S. Coast Guard, Traverse City, Michigan.

The academic program is approved by the AMA through the Undersea Medical Society for 25 Category I CME credits. For information please contact Medical Seminars, Inc., 11107 Wurzbach Road, Suite 204, San Antonio, TX 78230; (512) 690-1005.

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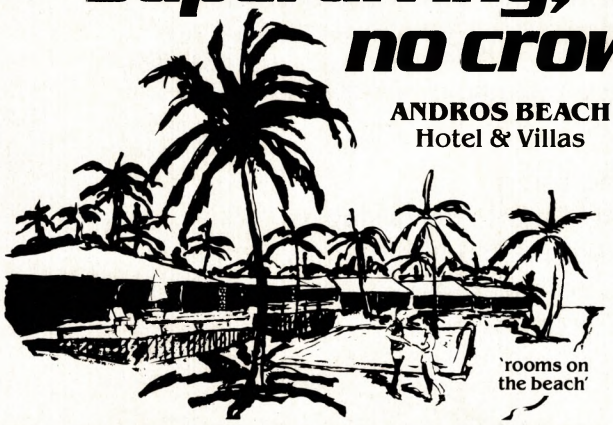
(Continued from Page 85)

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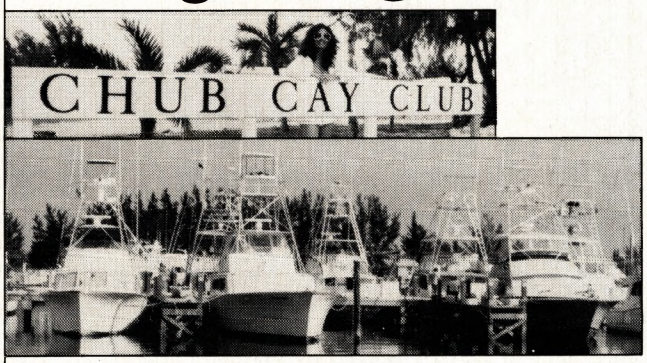
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BONNE TERRE

(Continued from Page 88)

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Note: Rick Frehsee has photographed and produced L' Aventure Bonne Terre, *an audio/visual program that has won a national Addy award. It is featured at major U/W film festivals throughout the U.S. and Canada.*

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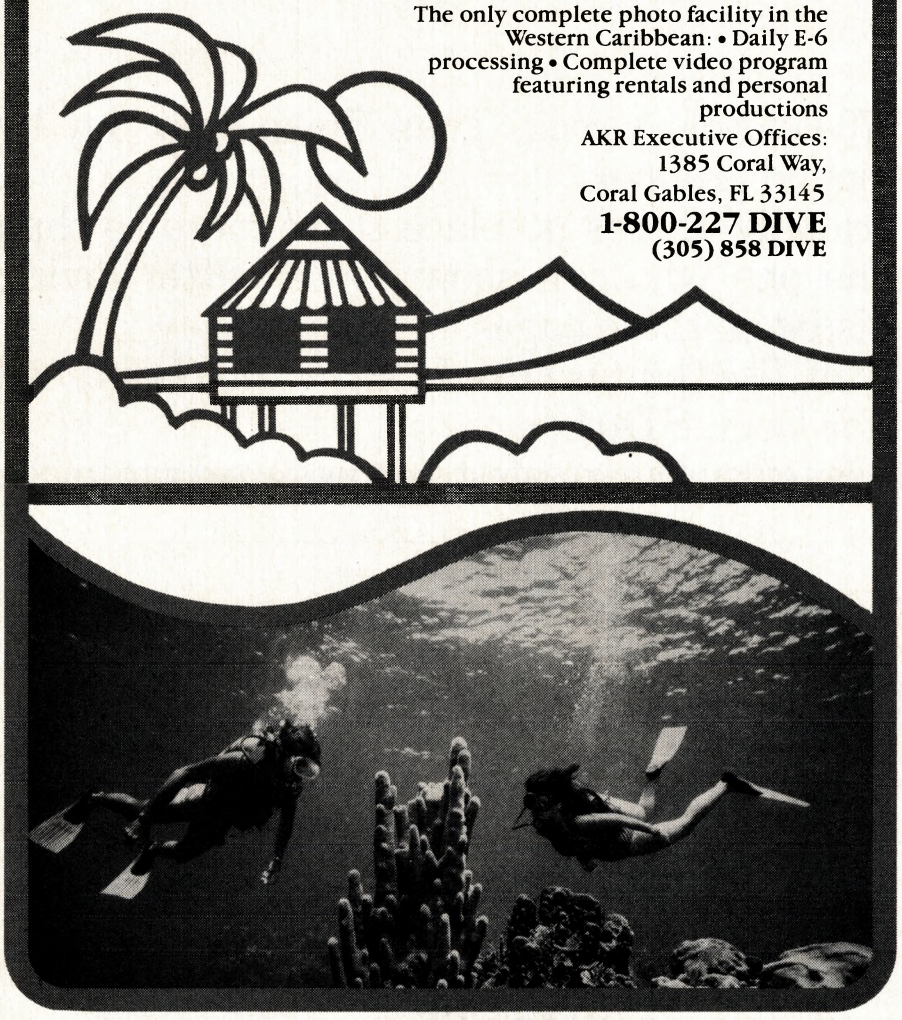
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DELTA DREAM PACKAGES TO CAYMAN

Grand Cayman is one of the newest Caribbean destinations in Delta's Dream Vacation offerings through Certified Tours Inc., which was appointed an official wholesaler by the Cayman Islands Hotel Association and Cayman Islands Department of Tourism.

Working exclusively with Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd. and the Royal Palms Hotel and Holiday Inn Grand Cayman on Seven Mile Beach, the Grand Cayman Delta Dream Vacation packages include connections to Grand Cayman via Cayman Airways jets from Miami.

Packages include either four days/three nights or eight days/seven nights accommodation at either resort on Seven Mile Beach; round trip air fare to Miami on Delta; round trip air fare to Grand Cayman on Cayman Airways; and round trip airport transfers to Royal Palms or Holiday Inn.

The unique option of the Cayman Delta Dream Vacation packages is a two for one learn to dive lesson through Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd. Customers will have the exclusive opportunity to experience an actual open water scuba dive, accompanied by a certified scuba instructor.

Rates for the Cayman Delta Dream Vacation packages are available from other Delta gateways through the Delta Vacation Center, (800) 523-7777; in Florida (Broward County), (305) 522-1337.

DIVI HOTELS/BONAIRE

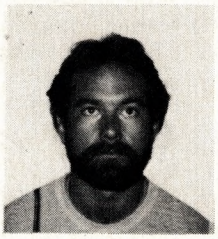
Divi Hotels has opened Club Flamingo at the Flamingo Beach Hotel & Casino on Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles. This hotel/condominium timeshare complex was designed by Divi corporate architect, Guy Lovelace, with divers in mind. According to Flamingo's general manager, Paul Maduro, this new addition consists of 40 units furnished with handcrafted Haitian furniture. Each of these air-conditioned deluxe studio apartments includes its own fully-equipped kitchen, private bath, large sun terrace and dive equipment storage area. A queen size bed, in addition to a queen size fold-out sofa bed, allows each unit to accommodate four in comfort. Louvered windows and ceiling fans take advantage of the constant Bonairean tradewinds.

Club Flamingo will feature a Peter Hughes dive shop and pier with instructors, modern facilities and a versatile fleet of dive boats.

Club Flamingo, like other Divi timeshare and club membership properties, affords guests the opportunity to have their own "home" in Bonaire for as many

weeks each year as they wish, without the burdens of maintenance. The most recent of Divi's three timeshare properties, Club Flamingo conforms to Divi's concept of timesharing by offering 40 rent free weeks of vacationing for a one time investment and an annual maintenance fee. Guests may choose to vacation one week each year for up to 40 years or, subject to availability, they may exercise the privilege of vacationing more than one week each year up to 40 weeks. Club Flamingo offers a five week package of unlimited diving, good at any Peter Hughes dive operation, to members of Club Flamingo. Guests may also exhange their vacation privileges, subject to availability, at any other Divi Hotel, as well as any of the more than 500 resorts within the Interval International worldwide exchange network.

Club Flamingo has its own freshwater swimming pool and conference room. In addition, guests may enjoy all the facilities of the adjoining Flamingo Beach Hotel and Casino. Other amenities shared by Club Flamingo include an intimate



sand beach, an additional freshwater swimming pool and nightly entertainment.

Additionally, Peter Hughes and Divi Hotels have appointed Harry Ward to the position of dive operations manager of the Netherlands Antilles Operations.

Ward will be in charge of Dive Bonaire, the new Dive Bonaire II, at Flamingo Beach Hotel and the all new venture, Peter Hughes Underwater Curacao.

Further information can be obtained through Divi Hotels Executive Office (607) 277-DIVI; or toll free (800) 252-6323 in New York State, (800) 847-7198 all other states.

TROPIC BIRD

To truly capture the essence of the British Virgin Islands and for sheer convenience and easy access to diving, overlook the hotels and opt for the motor vessel *Tropic Bird*. It has 12 double cabins, a sundeck, bar, TV movies and games, and air-conditioning throughout.

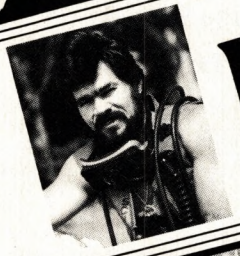
Unlimited diving is ensured, in fact guaranteed, as the *Tropic Bird* meanders through the islands and cays. If you miss a day of diving owing to weather, the full package price is refunded.

Reasonable air fares, with convenient connections, are available from most major cities through San Juan, Puerto Rico. Air BVI has frequent service from San Juan to Tortola. Call Scuba Tours at (800) 526-1394 for information.

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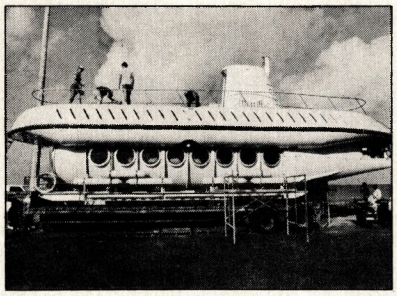
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ALOHA BOAT

With her purchase of a 34 foot Trojan, twin engine boat, Jackie James—the owner of Aloha Dive Shop in Koko Marina near Hawaii Kai—has brought the number of vessels in her fleet to three. Her newest boat is the *Easy Diver*. Charters are offered in both the morning and the afternoon, seven days a week.

On the dives visitors are offered guided tours where they are likely to see a vast



array of tropical fish, turtles, octopus and more. The skippers of the dive boat, Jon-Jon or Kevin, are certified scuba instructors. The other crew members are instructors or divemasters.

For information contact Aloha Dive Shop, Koko Marine Shopping Center, Honolulu, HI 96825; (808) 395-5922.

OCEAN ODYSSEYS/PNG

Ocean Odysseys is offering two diving expeditions to the waters of Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea. Departing May 10 and May 24, these trips will include ten days of unlimited diving in virgin waters. Limited to a maximum of ten divers, each group will be accompanied by experienced guides who know Papua New Guinea intimately.

For details, call Ocean Odysseys at (919) 967-6406 or write to P.O. Box 3322 Chapel Hill, NC 27515.

RIDING ROCK INN

The Riding Rock Inn (San Salvador, Bahamas) and its dive operation, Island Water Sports, Ltd., have been purchased by Carter's Enterprises, Ltd. of San Salvador and have reopened. Returning to the resort as manager of the diving services is Al Zamrok, an eight year veteran of San Sal diving. The dive shop, photo center and marina are within a three minute walk from the inn and face the leeward side of the island, well protected from the prevailing winds. The majority of dive sites are on this side of the island.

Packages feature air-conditioned oceanfront or pool-view accommodations, three meals per day, three dives per day, weightbelt, backpack, boat transportation, applicable taxes, gratuities and transfers to and from the airport on the island. Regularly scheduled air service is being offered by the stateside reservations office in Ft. Lauderdale.

Stateside representatives, Jan Milbyer and Maureen Morgenthien, certified divers and underwater photographers, offer

an excess of 11 years of San Salvador experience. For information, reservations or flight arrangements, please contact Out Island Service Company, Inc., P.O. Box 24444, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33310.

ROESSLER/SEE & SEA TO SUDAN

See & Sea Travel of San Francisco is offering a new diving adventure in the Southern Red Sea. Cruising out of Port Sudan aboard the air-conditioned, 110 foot *White Elephant*, See & Sea groups will enjoy unlimited diving in 84°F water; two major wrecks; Jacques Cousteau's



1952 underwater habitat; shark feedings; and superlative, undamaged reefs.

The inaugural cruise with Carl and Jessica Roessler will occur April 11-24. For further information contact See & Sea Travel, 680 Beach St., Suite. 340, San Francisco, California 94109; (415) 771-0077.

CARIB INN BOATS

Divers staying at the Carib Inn were recently treated to a dive trip that went all the way around the main island of Bonaire. This is the first time a dive boat took guests on such a trip. Many new areas were explored and others charted for future excursions. Bruce Bowker, the owner of the Carib Inn, said he has wanted to make such a boat trip for many years. Finally, with new Privateer boats, it was possible. Bowker also says he now has plans to dive Klein Curacao when the conditions are good. Klein Curacao is a small island 30 miles west of Bonaire.

The Carib Inn specializes in more distant and remote dive areas. Many of these sites have not been visited by any other dive boat. For more information write to the Carib Inn, P.O. Box 68, Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles.

TRIMARINE STAFF

Duncan and Annie Muirhead have changed crew members on their liveaboard sail/dive trimarans. Dave Parker, who has been with the company four years—the last two of these as captain of the *Misty Law*—has taken over as captain of the superyacht *Lammer Law*. Tim Fox, who has been chief diver on the *Lammer Law* for 18 months, takes over as captain and chief diver on *Misty Law*. Les Annan, a PADI master instructor with NAUI, YMCA and SSI affiliations, moves up from head instructor on the *Tropic Bird* to chief instructor on *Lammer Law*.



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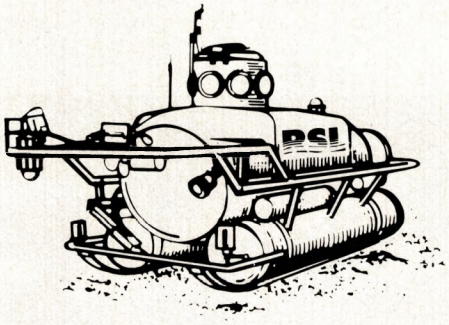
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CAYMAN PACKAGES

Divers can now divide a week's diving between two islands, experiencing not only top Grand Cayman dive sites with Don Foster's Dive Grand Cayman Ltd., but also the wild, little-explored reefs and drop-offs off Cayman Brac with Peter Hughes' Dive Tiara. This exclusive two-island dive vacation combines accommodations at Divi Hotels' Tiara Beach on Cayman Brac and the Royal Palms on Grand Cayman's Seven Mile Beach.

The Best of the Caymans is the first co-operative holiday offering by two of Cayman's top scuba operations and features a special low air fare on Cayman Airways as part of the eight days/seven nights package price.

Options include a slight difference in the time spent on each island, but both vacation packages begin on Cayman

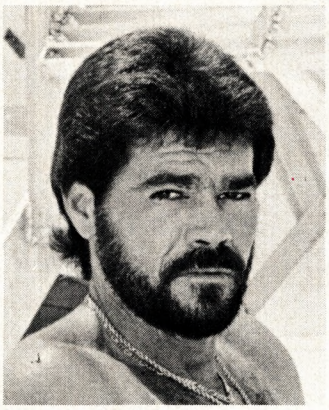


Don Foster

Brac. Divers preferring more time on the Brac should choose the Sunday to Sunday package, which features four nights and three days of diving at Tiara Beach, and three nights and three days of diving at Royal Palms. Included in the package is special round trip air fare on Cayman Airways from Miami; welcome cocktail at both hotels; accommodations at both hotels; three days' diving with tank, backpack and weights included (three two-tank guided morning reef trips) on Cayman Brac; one night dive or Little Cayman dive, weather permitting; unlimited use of a tank with free air fills for shore diving on Cayman Brac; Dive Tiara T-Shirt or visor. At the Royal Palms, it includes three guided two-tank reef trips (one daily); one afternoon one tank dive or one night dive, depending on availability; unlimited use of a tank with free air fills for shore diving; weekend U/W slide show by Ocean Photos photo pro.

The Friday to Friday packages also include special round trip air fare from Miami on Cayman Airways and three nights/two days of diving at Tiara Beach; four nights/four days' diving at Royal Palms, with welcome cocktail and superior accommodations at both resorts.

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Peter Hughes

The Cayman Brac portion includes two two-tank morning guided reef trips, with tank, weightbelt and backpack included; unlimited use of a tank with free air fills for shore diving; one night dive; Dive Tiara T-shirt or visor.

The Grand Cayman Segment features four two-tank guided reef trips (one daily); tank, backpack, weightbelt; one afternoon one-tank or one night dive, choice based on availability; unlimited use of a tank with free air fills for shore diving; Tuesday treasure hunt and underwater slide show.

For information contact Scuba Tours Inc.; toll free (800) 526-1394. In New Jersey call (201) 256-9115.

DIVE BEQUIA

A new dive operation was recently opened on a remote island in the southern Caribbean. Bequia is in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Windward Islands, West Indies. Dive Bequia is owned and operated by Bob Sachs and Anne Grone. Sachs has previously owned and operated shops in New Jersey and Papua New Guinea. Grone started her diving career in Bequia this year with Bob and is training to be an instructor.

The dive shop can outfit ten divers. The maximum travel time to a dive site in the 22 foot Mako is ten minutes. Dive sites range over seven miles of unexplored reef. There are also uninhabited neighboring islands to discover.

Tourism is very new to Bequia, and still in the development stage. The island is seven miles long and one mile wide with many secluded white sand beaches—all within walking distance or a $5 taxi ride.

Getting to Bequia is not an easy step on and off experience. This is why the island still has all the flavor of the past. First you fly a major airline to Barbados or St. Lucia and then connect with a smaller company to St. Vincent. From there you catch a local schooner for a one hour ride across to Bequia. There are several hotels there, two of which cater to divers and have dive packages available. The atmosphere is slow and relaxed.

For further information contact Dive Bequia, P.O. Box 16 Bequia, St. Vincent, Grenadines, West Indies.

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Plunge into a world like no other–the Underwater Park of Curacao. Over 12 miles of unspoiled natural beauty right off the coast of the most beautiful island in the Caribbean, Curacao. This coral reef sanctuary was created just for you and a few million species of marine life. And for your safety, the government of Curacao has provided the finest compression chamber anywhere. The fantastic island of Curacao awaits your every pleasure...from sun drenched beaches to a nightlife unrivaled in the Caribbean. Take the plunge. Everything you ever wanted in an underwater experience you'll find in the Underwater Park of Curacao.

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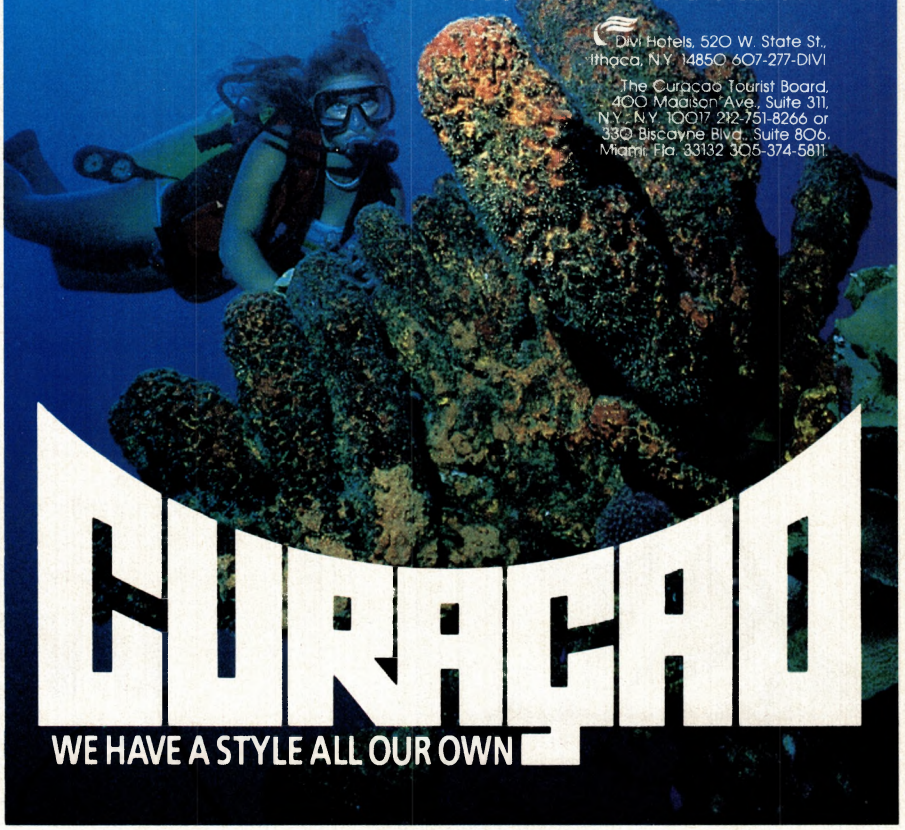
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The Curacao Tourist Board, 400 Madison Ave., Suite 311, N.Y., N.Y. 10017 212-751-8266 or 330 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 806, Miami Fla. 33132 305-374-5811.



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ROATAN/ BAY ISLANDS

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CARIB AQUACULTURE

(Continued from Page 94)

the hatchery. There the eggs will be induced to hatch and then undergo two weeks of swimming metamorphosis before dropping to the tank bottom as perfectly formed conchs about the size of a pinhead. The University of Miami, which performed its own conch research using far more high tech support than the island hatchery, had to purchase the eggs from Hesse's earlier pilot venture, receiving less fresh, less fertile eggs via air freight for its non-site specific location.

Yet, despite the localized nature of aquacultural projects in the Caribbean, the nurturing of marine life at any phase is tricky business. Undiscovered tropical diseases, temperature changes and the accidental introduction of microscopic predators into a hatchery can all prove deadly to the growing young herd. "It took five to six years before the larval growth of the conch was figured out," says biologist Davis. Davis even keeps a cot in the hatchery to deal with the round-the-clock demands of culturing during the seven day work week that the height of the spawning season demands. "For all of our science," she says, "this is still a very intuitive type of work. We have to watch these animals very closely. We're always learning something new."

On Providenciales the aquatic conch farm consists of a geodesic hatchery housing lab support facilities and a separate fabrication shop. There is also a pump room where sea water is carefully filtered before it is channeled down to hatchery tanks—and where feed levels are controlled by a handmade, computerized switching panel. Translucent fiberglass panels cover the top of the dome, letting the abundant tropical sunlight in to promote algae growth in tanks on the top level of the hatchery for feeding the larval conch in tanks below.

On five waterfront acres at the northeastern end of Provo on a picturesque cut called Leeward Going Through, the farm is a special blend of island ingenuity and localized-but-modern technology. Practically every piece of equipment, from the 1,100 liter larval tanks with the PVC legs to the screened bottom egg mass trays, was specially designed to meet the specific needs of remote island mariculture. In a locale where you can't just pop down to the hardware store for a missing part, the emphasis has been on the best use of appropriate technology and the creative reworking of available raw materials. And, when private generator utility costs inflate electricity rates to 35¢/kwh (about five times that of U.S. rates), the use of renewable resources—abundant throughout the Caribbean—makes a lot of sense. A solar heat pump, expected to pay for itself in energy savings in three years, has the capacity of

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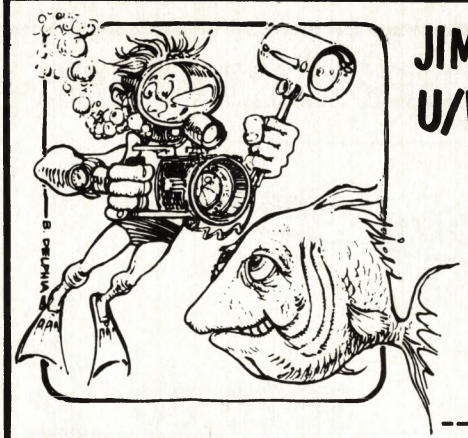
CARIB AQUACULTURE

pumping up to 400,000 gallons daily. Gravity feeds from two bermed holding tanks can supply the hatchery with sea water for up to 12 hours with no outside energy. A small photovoltaic system powers the project's radio link with the outside world. And, the general passive solar design of the geodesic structure understates the dedication to renewables.

After the conch eggs hatch and are nurtured through the three weeks of floating metamorphosis, the pinhead-sized miniature conch lose their swimming "lobes" and settle to the bottom where they will spend the rest of their lives. Native technicians, responsible for daily maintenance of the tanks, almost immediately remove the tiny conchs to nearby wet tables. They remain there for several weeks until they are large enough to be moved out to a series of underwater cages in a nearby cove. Davis plans to move 5,500 baby conch in and out of the nursery on a daily basis, relocating nearly two million animals in the aquatic cages by the end of the 1985 growing season. By 1986, with an estimated two million, three inch juveniles bursting out of the cages, it will be time for one last relocation to a final grow-out in a fenced underwater compound in front of the hatchery.

The perseverance of Davis and other unsung biologists, who have been quietly working in the region to make fish farming as productive as agriculture elsewhere, may finally be rewarded. Says Leroy Creswell, a Harbor Branch Institute consultant who often works with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on projects in the region: "I think mariculture stands a better chance in the region now than ever before. Caribbean nations are so resource poor that aquaculture can be the panacea they need for real food production. And, now that biologists have laid the groundwork, the private sector realizes the time has come for investment." Real money successes with marine shrimp in countries such as Panama and Ecuador over the last few years by American companies like Ralston Purina were the watershed for private investors. And, a 1981 USAID program has been designed to upstep aquacultural research, to aid in an effort to help the transfer of technology to the undeveloped countries and to create ongoing fish farming ventures ripe for private support. "Investors are finally beginning to catch on," says Creswell.

Adds Robert Ross, president of the Latin American Agribusiness Development Corporation, a private Coral Gables, Florida, development bank: "Five and six years ago, I wouldn't even consider aquaculture. Now, we're actively looking for projects in the region. We're taking advantage of the mistakes made by others years ago."



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THE DEBRAAK

BY ELLSWORTH BOYD

Four men hunch over a grog-stained map spread on an old oaken table in a dimly lit tavern on the waterfront. They speak in whispers above the din of clinking glasses and frivolous conversation from a few patrons on the opposite side of the room. One of the four strokes an unkempt beard as he expounds on ships, the sea and Spanish treasure. The map,



photo/Mike Dillon

he concludes, will lead them to fame, fortune and a life of leisure. "Pieces of eight and golden doubloons are waiting to be plucked by those who have the gumption to brave the dangers that ride in the wake of the quest," says he.

Shades of Long John Silver, Jim Hawkins and the Admiral Benbow Inn! Robert Lewis Stevenson would return from his grave in utter glee to witness this modern-day scenario of his legendary *Treasure Island*. Only this is supposed to be real—according to a group called World Wide Salvage. One of its members, the sole survivor of a 1935 expedition searching for the treasure ship, *Debraak*, says he shared a map with Harvey Harrington in a Rhode Island tavern in 1983. The map supposedly pinpointed the wreck of the British brig-of-war, HMS *Debraak*—laden with pillaged Spanish gold that went down with the ship off Lewes, Delaware in 1798.

But Harrington, whose name is now synonymous with Marty Bayerle, Bert Webber, Barry Clifford and other new wave salvors, didn't need a map to locate

one of the most astounding treasure troves of the 20th century. He used sidescan sonar, sophisticated technology that is revolutionizing treasure hunting by creating a three-dimensional portrait of the ocean floor.

"We covered two square miles of ocean," Harrington says, "targeting 11 wrecks with the scanner. The fifth wreck we investigated was the *Debraak*." Working under a lease obtained from the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Harrington and his dive team—called Sub-Sal, Inc.—began operations in choppy seas with poor visibility. When the divers retrieved a small cannon and some artifacts, Harrington was granted salvage rights (the state receives 25 percent of everything recovered) to the wreck that more than a dozen expeditions had failed to locate for nearly 200 years.

Operating from the 70 foot long salvage vessel, *Mariner*, seven commercial divers—split into two teams—rotate in 100 minute shifts around the clock. The average depth is 80 feet, necessitating 37 minutes of breathing pure oxygen in a decompression chamber aboard ship. A 1,000 pound weight, maneuvered to the bottom by operations chief, Terry Edgecomb, holds a permanent downline in place for the diver. The diver's air umbilical and communication cables are electromagnetically connected to the downline. Once on the bottom the diver disconnects the magnets and goes about his business. The permanent anchor of the downline and the electromagnets are the diver's home base and prevent him from being swept away by spring tides that reach eight knots. Two to three knots and nearly zero visibility constitute average working conditions.

Lead diver Joe Amaral, trained in his early days by New England Divers and later a graduate of Ocean Corporation, a commercial diving school in Houston, explains how he found positive proof of the *Debraak's* identity. "We were bringing up intriguing artifacts from the beginning, such as armaments, medicine bottles, pewter plates, ceramics, crystal and ship's fittings. We were enthused, but a couple of newspaper reporters questioned our credibility because we had no 'treasure' nor proof that this was the *Debraak*. Then I found the ring and we all became famous overnight."

Harrington continues: "Joe was down vacuuming away debris with the airlift when he spotted a cache of gold coins gleaming in the silt. Visibility was good that day—about two feet—and as he plucked them from the bottom we could hear him on the intercom exclaiming, 'A gold coin! Another gold coin! Whoops, there's another one!' He found 21 gold coins on that dive, plus a small gold ring. Later, when Joe was in the decompression chamber, he heard us all screaming and yelling. He thought we were celebrating the gold coin find, but these were

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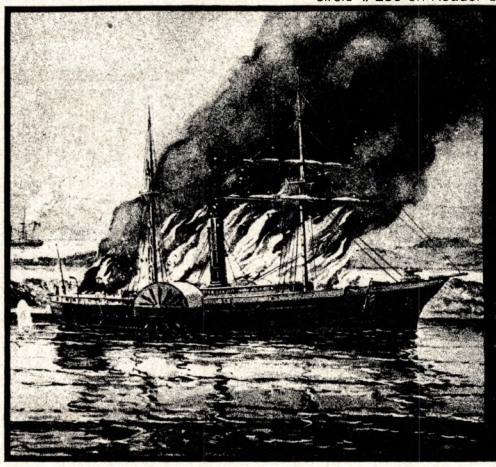


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DEBRAAK

rather insignificant at the time. It was the inscription on the ring that delivered the cheers. It reads: 'In memory of my brother, Capt. John Drew, drowned 11 January, 1798, aged 47.' No doubts lingered . . . our wreck was the *Debraak*."

James Drew was the captain of the *Debraak*. John was his twin brother, captain of the HMS *Cerebus*, lost with all hands off Cornwall, England only four months before the *Debraak* went down. The ring, probably left in a box with coins and other jewelry, was a memorial from James Drew to his brother, John. Had James been wearing his ring when the *Debraak* sank, documentation of the wreck might have been difficult. The captain's body washed ashore three days after the disaster and is buried in St. Peter's cemetery, Lewes, Delaware.



photos/Doug Ayers

Sub-Sal had hit a "hot spot" and within a few days divers recovered more than 100 gold coins, all dated prior to 1797. The oldest is dated 1742. More than 200 silver coins were stuck together in one large clump, mostly Spanish, but some were of French and English mintage. One gold coin has been identified as a 1795 Spanish piece bearing a picture of Spain's Charles IV. Robert Reedy, Jr., a marine archaeologist working with the expedition, says the coin appears to have been minted in Mexico City. Spanish doubloons and eight escudo pieces, dated 1792 to 1796, bear marks indicating they were minted in Mexico City and Peru.

"We are quite confident that this is part of a taken treasure," says diver John Fish. "Many of the coins show no wear at all. They appear in near perfect condition, possibly freshly minted and on their way to Spain." Sub-Sal vice president Joseph Wise says that Spanish doubloons in good condition are normally worth from $800 to $1,200, but a coin's history, such as its recovery from a noted wreck, can add substantially to its value for collectors. Some of the coins have already been appraised at $4,000 each

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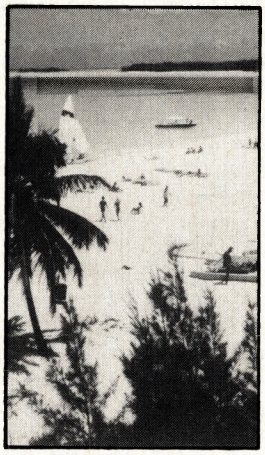
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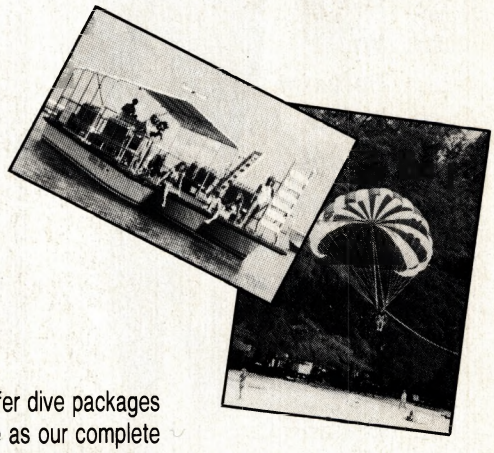
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DEBRAAK

and one, a rare Portuguese guinea, is estimated to be worth $75,000.

Divers Tom Peterson, Jim Cummings and Don Chaulker are as enthused about the other artifacts as they are the coins. They talk about swords still in their leather scabbards, matching dueling pistols—possibly Captain Drew's—with the gunsmith's name clearly inscribed, a brass telescope with optics intact, rum and wine bottles unopened, a 3,000 pound crate of cannonballs, shivs, deadeyes, copper spikes and cartographer's tools. Some of these are in the exact same condition as the day they were lost. The list goes on, but the most prized so far is an elegant silver chalice one foot high, nine inches in diameter at the top, with statuettes of angels decorating the handles.

Joe Amaral speaks for himself and many of the crew when he says: "Sure, the treasure is exciting, but after initial discoveries of gold and silver coins, you start to dwell on the history. When I'm down there I'm in a time capsule that's taking me back nearly 200 years. The times, traditions and people of the era ex-



cite me. That's when treasure becomes secondary." Amaral, Harrington and Wise have proven they are as interested in preserving the artifacts and recording the history of the wreck as they are in retrieving its treasure. They are still researching the past of the *Debraak*.

The *Debraak* was built by the English in 1781, purchased by the Dutch and registered in Holland as a merchant vessel. In 1795 the British played Indian-giver, capturing her in the Battle of Falmouth and returning the sleek vessel to dry dock for refitting. The peaceful merchantman emerged as a fighting brig, armed with 16 carronades—short range, swivel-mounted guns that belched 24 pound fuse-lit cannonballs gorged with powder onto the decks of unsuspecting predators. Although the 85 foot long ship was originally built as a single masted cutter,

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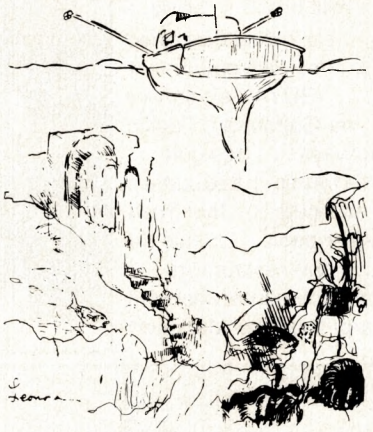
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the refitting process added a 110 foot mast that converted her into a trim brig of extraordinary speed and finesse.

Terry Edgecomb says: "She became one of the fastest, meanest, most highly maneuverable ships in the British Navy. The name, *Debraak*, is Dutch for a small, fast, brown dog used for hunting. She lived up to her name when vessels twice her size approached thinking she was a merchantman of easy prey. Suddenly the *Debraak's* gun ports swung open and she broadsided the enemy with short barreled carronades, then finished them off with two long guns capable of blowing the gunnels out of any vessel."

Drew took command of the HMS *Debraak* in 1797 and was ordered to assist in convoy operations that protected British merchantmen sailing to the New World. Somehow Drew finagled his way out of the convoy and made his ship a privateer—a ward of the British crown that raided merchant vessels of any nation unfriendly to Britain. In return, the captain and crew received a percentage of the profits from stolen goods after they were auctioned. It's not clear how many ships Drew plundered, but records reveal at least six and possibly 16. One, a Spanish galleon, was returning to Spain from Peru laden with gold and silver.



photo/courtesy Sub-Sal

In 1789, overloaded and under excessive sail, the *Debraak* approached Cape Henlopen, off Lewes, encountered a freak storm, tipped over and sank. The ship was only a mile and a half from shore. The rest of the story—rumors of $500 million in treasure, the expeditions that sought it, and the determination of Harrington to find it—is all history.

Harvey Harrington stands at the gravesite of Captain James Drew. The sun is setting, its slanting rays filtering through ashen clouds, lending an almost heavenly aura to the stillness in St. Peter's Cemetery. Gently, he rolls Drew's small 18 carat gold ring back and forth between thumb and forefinger.

"You know, there's a legend that evolved in Lewes years ago about a weather witch," Harrington says. "It's an evil spirit, sort of a demon that guards the wreck against intruders. Legend also says that only the reincarnation of James Drew can exorcise the demon." Harrington pauses, then slips the ring on his pinkie. It fits perfectly. Robert Lewis Stevenson would have loved it.



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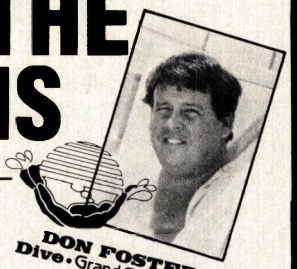
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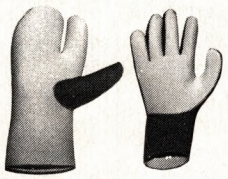
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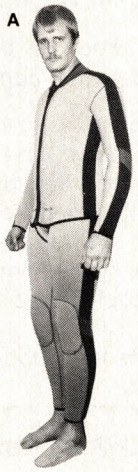
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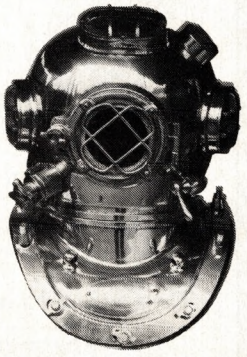
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800 FT. WALL DIVE

(Continued from Page 23)

THE WALL

Grand Cayman is most famous for the vertical wall that surrounds the island. On the west side, where PC-8 operates, the wall begins in approximately 80 feet of water, then drops to 550 feet. From there it takes on about an 80 degree slope to a point several miles from shore where the bottom is 6,000 feet deep. The wall begins less than half a mile from shore allowing immediate access. Sport diving on the wall is done daily to a maximum depth of 110 feet. Any diver who visits it could tell you the lure of the deep is felt stronger the deeper you go. With U/W visibility of 100-200 feet, you can clearly see the sponge, wire coral and black coral growth simply continues to intensify below you. PC-8 has allowed us to verify that observation as being more than just an hallucination brought about by nitrogen narcosis. In the range of 100-200 feet, bushy brown-black coral trees, *Antipathes salix*, increase in both number and size. Red and purple rope sponges, tube sponges, barrel sponges and deep sea gorgonians all seem to be more prevalent. Marine life zonation is clearly evident during the descent as some species disappear while others make their debut. The several species of Antipatharia (black coral) serve as an excellent example. The large *Antipathes salix* is generally seen between 80 and 300 feet. The smaller, bottle brush black coral, *Antipathes hirta* is generally seen below 200. At approximately 400 feet a thermocline is encountered that is so distinct it becomes visible as a thin ethereal layer.

Below the thermocline the wall takes on a new character. Growth is relatively sparse compared to the shallower 100-300 foot range. The wall looks very eerie, with pan sized pock marks on a sheer face. Just when you begin to think an atom bomb must have been detonated here, a long, drooping, pale colored tube sponge appears, then, off to the side, you spot a ridge covered in growth. Every ridge or outcropping looks like an oasis with a plethora of marine life not seen by divers in the shallower realm. Below the 300 foot level the prevalent Antipatharia include several species of flat fan black coral and a variety of delicate wire corals. A small but beautiful fish, the heliotrope, is found in this range. The heliotrope is about three inches long, has a radiant lavender head on a vibrant yellow body with a translucent glass-like quality. A rare and exciting find is the highly prized slit shell, *Entemnotrochus adansoniana*, found only in deep water and valued at over $800. The slit shell is a large variety of top shell decorated with brilliant variegated colors like a Picasso painting.

Clinging to many of the black coral fans are basket stars, crinoids and brittlestars. In some places, delicate long pale tube sponges hang pendulously from fragile bases of attachment, oblivious to surface disturbances in the tranquil waters of the deep wall. Many species of fish are attracted to the front of PC-8, either to hang dazed by the bright lights or to wonder at this rarest of beasts. On one trip a Nassau grouper, larger than record, stayed with PC-8 45 minutes nosing about until it put a fin into a thruster, resulting in a hasty departure amid a shower of scales.

A common sight is the delicate white, fan shaped deep water *Madrepora* coral. The *Madrepora* fans are roughly a foot and a half in height and two and one half feet wide, numerous and provide elevated vantage points for a wide variety of invertebrates. The most obvious inhabitants of the *Madrepora* fans are the several species of crinoids that display lovely radial patterns of feather-like feeding appendages. In the shallower depths, they hide in crevices, but on the deep wall they extend themselves fully in all of their splendor. The stalked crinoid is the most primitive and unique of all. Like the crocodile, it is a living relic of a time forgotten. In the relatively low light level of the 700-800 foot depth range, the stalked crinoids have adopted a ghostly white color. Standing about two to three feet tall, they raise their crown of feeding appendages well into the current, supported by the erect stalk. The stalk is lined with prehensile cirri that anchor the base of the crinoid to the substrate.

Among the most interesting geological features to be seen from the sub are the pinnacle-like formations known as slump blocks or haystacks, which rise 30-130 feet from the sandy slope at the base of the wall. The term haystack is descriptive while the term slump block is suggestive of one theory of the origin of these mysterious monoliths. Some of the blocks appear to have been large chunks of coral that fell from the top of the wall. Many of the blocks, however, show evidence of erosion. Were they eroded before falling from the top or was the sea level once 550 feet lower than its present position? A combination of the two theories may be closest to the truth. It is commonly believed that the Caribbean Sea was at one time as much as 400 feet lower than its present level. Each observer will form his or her own opinion of the origin of these ancient sentinels of time.

A rare and thrilling excursion of this nature appeals to a wide range of interest groups. Scuba divers, non-swimmers, biologists, geologists, Cousteau followers and your cousin's brother's friend, will all share an appreciation for the natural beauty of Cayman's deep wall. For information write to: Research Submersibles Limited, P.O. Box 1719, Grand Cayman, BWI; telex: RSLSUB CP4519; phone: (809) 949-3870.

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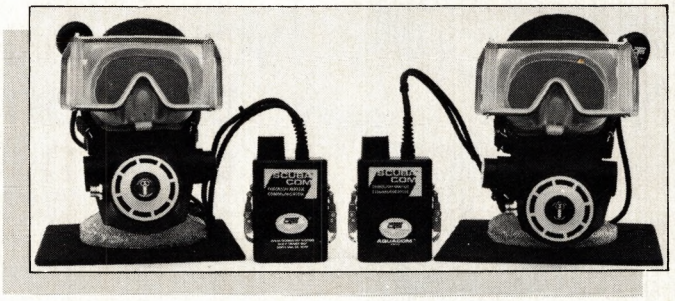
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Dr. Alfred Bove gives Skin Diver readers a "hands-on" experience with a scorpionfish in the February issue. Although non aggressive and extraordinarily well camouflaged, it can pose a serious threat to divers. Discover a simple cure for the toxic reaction to a sting in Diving Medicine next month.

skin diver

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ISDA DIVE MEET

What is being labeled as the world's largest gathering of divers in the history of the sport is currently being planned by the International Skin Divers Association to take place in the spring of 1986. Current locations for the meet under evaluation by ISDA officials include Florida's East Coast; Ft. Lauderdale/Miami area, the Florida Keys and Tampa/St. Pete.

According to ISDA officials, 5,000—8,000 hotel/motel rooms and camping accommodations will be needed for ISDA members and their families during the week long schedule of diving activities. Divers will be coming in from around the world to participate in such planned activities as reef and wreck diving, spearfishing, treasure hunting, specialty courses, seminars, lectures, equipment displays, movies, etc.

The dive meet, which is being called Divers Jubilee I, will be free to all ISDA members and their families. Discounts will be available on all food, lodging, dive equipment, charter boats etc. at participating ISDA business network members.

For more information contact ISDA, P.O. Box 130007, Tampa, FL 33681.

SCUBATEC/EAST TEXAS

A new full service dive store is open to serve divers in the East Texas Lakes area. Scubatec, in Lufkin, Texas at the Towne Square Shopping Center, offers complete diving sales, service and equipment rentals along with PADI educational programs that include 12 specialties. For information on Scubatec or East Texas Lakes Area diving, contact David K. Ferry at (409) 637-1797.

URI TO CONTINUE WORK

Contributions by PADI, the Diving Equipment Manufacturers Association (DEMA) and the Divers Alert Network (DAN) have enabled the University of Rhode Island (URI) to continue its Underwater Safety Project through 1986. URI provides the only central data collection and analysis for diving accidents in the U.S. Equipment manufacturers, diver training agencies and others have come to rely heavily on URI statistics.

Earlier this year URI sent out a request for funds to the entire diving industry. Without these funds, URI would have to discontinue its diving accident research. PADI and DEMA each donated $10,000. DAN contributed $1,000. Together, these donations allowed URI to obtain matching funds from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Over the past several years, URI statistic have shown a 50 percent decline in diving accidents, compared with the number of participants. This statistic confirms that the diving community's efforts to improve diver safety are paying off.

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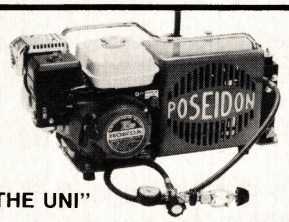
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Fear Battle

Salvage Diver Faces Terrifying Memories In The Silt Of A South Carolina Lake

BY WENDELL M. PATTON III

There was just a hint of chill in the morning air as my son and I gazed out over the brown-green waters of Lake Greenwood, a manmade lake in the western part of South Carolina. He was proud to be accompanying me today. He had helped me pack and load my scuba equipment, checking, examining and explaining the use of each piece. Even though he was enrolled in a scuba course and would be certified before the end of summer, he wanted to be a diver *now*. He never missed the chance to tell someone he was going to be a scuba diver just like his dad. When he found out I had been retained to make a recovery dive in Lake Greenwood—well, I knew I wouldn't be making this trip alone.

Although my son was only 12, I knew he sensed but didn't understand the apprehension I was feeling. Lake Greenwood and I had met before, more than 30 years previously, and that meeting had nearly cost me my life.

As we stood there waiting for my client, the memories of that day came flooding back. I was almost hoping my client wouldn't show up. At least that way I wouldn't embarrass myself or more importantly, my son, by having fear keep me from making this dive.

I was only five or six when it happened. I don't remember much about the day other than those very few moments. I was wading in waist deep water when suddenly there was no bottom. Whether I stepped in a hole or off a ledge I'll never know. Frantic efforts to keep my head above water failed and I went under. I was terribly afraid. I wondered where my father was; he had been so close just a minute before. I kicked and clawed the water, trying to get back to the surface, choking all the time. Then, just as quickly as it started, the fear went away. Trying to get to the surface didn't seem worth the effort anymore. I became fascinated with the way the color of the water

changed to a darker and darker shade of brown. The last thing I remember was thinking I saw an alligator. Even that didn't frighten me. As the imagined alligator swam by, the water turned black. I don't remember being pulled out.

I could still experience that initial wave of fear, that mindless panic, 30 odd years later. As my son and I turned to walk back to the car, small beads of sweat covered my forehead.

Within a few minutes my client arrived and I followed him to a wooden dock that protruded some 30 to 40 feet into the lake. A large gold necklace had fallen between two of the slats at the far end of the dock. I let a weighted line down to mark the approximate spot and returned to shore to suit up. As I prepared my equipment, my son put on a mask and fins and started to swim around the dock. I appreciated the few moments alone.

A small crowd began to form. Somehow people seem to know when you're diving for something in particular and not just out to have a good time. This did nothing to relieve the tension building inside me. There was very little chance the necklace would be recovered. Small personal items are virtually impossible to find, even for for an experienced search and recovery diver. My client understood the odds, but the people watching didn't.

I stepped into the water and put on my scuba tank. I could hear my son telling the onlookers about the fish he could see. I floated to the end of the dock. There I discovered the upright wooden support pilings had been strengthened by the addition of an interlocking, criss-crossed maze of angle iron. To get under the dock I first had to submerge about two feet, find an opening big enough to get through, then descend to the lake bottom. I would be literally caged underwater. There was no direct route out from under the dock. My mind was racing as I pulled in through the reinforcements and settled to the lake bottom.

I had to fight hard to control my breathing. It was time to get on with the search. Visibility was fair, maybe 15 inches or so. I had to be careful not to disturb the silt any more than necessary. I inched sideways across the bottom until I ran into the pilings, then moved forward six or eight inches and started sideways again until I reached the other side of the dock. I continued this back-and-forth search until I located the string and weight I had lowered from the dock. I stopped for a moment to let things settle. I examined the bottom for about a foot in all directions for any sign of the necklace—nothing. The necklace wasn't there. I resumed the side-to-side search in hopes I could find it that way.

I had moved several feet away from the weight when I felt something pressing into my side. Twisting just a little I felt something else pull against my tank. I stopped for a moment, then pushed forward a bit. I had run into a tree limb. I

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FEAR BATTLE

reached out with my hand and could feel limbs and branches in front of me, beside me and above me. I was under a brush pile, I was stuck. I couldn't get up or out. Fighting to maintain control, I slowly began to work my way loose. As soon as I was sure I was clear of the brush, I started moving left until I made contact with the dock supports, then pulled myself along the crossbars until I found an opening and surfaced.

I floated on the surface for a few seconds trying to regain my composure. I wanted to swim ashore, pack up and go home right then. But, that brush pile was going to have to be searched and I was the one employed to do it. I had to go back down.

The brush pile was bigger than I had thought. It protruded from both sides of the dock and was some three or four feet high. I got into it time and time again, pushing forward as far as I could each time, searching each branch, hoping to see the necklace hanging there—no luck. I moved what brush I could in order to search the bottom. The necklace wasn't there either. Every time I moved something, I searched the entire area again.

I surfaced to get an underwater metal detector. As I got it ready, I was told the marker dropped earlier had been moved to a new location. I submerged and started the entire search all over again, only this time using the metal detector. I found all kinds of stuff: a pair of sunglasses, a cigarette lighter, a couple of fish hooks, a few fishing weights, but no necklace. I located the weighted string and ran the detector across it. It indicated a find. Dismissing the reading as a reaction to the lead weight to which the string was tied, I simply picked up the weight and moved it. As I turned to continue the search, the detector went off again. By this time the water was extremely silty and I had to put my face right on the bottom to see anything. I saw what looked like a twist-off bottle cap. With two fingers I grasped the rim and lifted. As my hand rose, it became obvious this was not a bottle cap—it was long, it was flexible and it was gold. I had found the necklace!

I had been under the dock for more than 20 minutes. With the detector in one hand and the necklace clutched tightly in the other, I moved toward where I thought the pilings were—but they weren't there. I moved a little more—still no pilings. I had gotten turned around somehow. I felt the branches of the brush pile tangle around my legs. I had no idea which way to go. Thoughts of stepping off a ledge, of not being able to breathe, of drowning, closed in on me. I braced myself on the bottom. It was not going to end this way. I was going to find my way out. I moved

again and ran headfirst into a piling. I knew I was home free now. Putting the detector under my arm, I used my free hand to feel along the crossbeam until I found an exit, and through it I went, straight to the surface.

I watched as my client walked to the railing of the dock. I held up my fist with the necklace in it and opened two fingers, letting a loop of the necklace fall free so he could see it. I swam to the dock and pressed it into his hand. He had no words but the expression on his face told it all.

Later, as I stood on the shore packing away my equipment, my son asked question after question. He had wanted to be with me down there and later in the year he would be; but this particular moment, well, it was my time. I had delivered for my client. But more than that, I had delivered for me. I had faced a haunting fear that had plagued me for a lifetime. I had faced it on its own ground and emerged the victor.

MICHIGAN DIVE STORES SPONSOR WATERMAN

Recently, a group of Detroit area dive stores sponsored a Stan Waterman underwater film festival. This event was unique because the stores put aside competition and cooperated to promote an event that would benefit all.

The Michigan dive stores involved in the festival were: Advanced Aquatics of St. Clair Shores, Don's Dive Shop of Farmington Hills, Macomb Dive Shop of Warren, Pontiac Scuba Center and U.S. Scuba Center of Rochester.

JOURNAL OF HYPERBARIC MEDICINE

The rapidly emerging medical/scientific subspecialty, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, claims its own with the debut of the Journal of Hyperbaric Medicine. Formerly known as the Hyperbaric Oxygen Review, the Journal will feature original clinical articles, scientific communications, book reviews, meeting announcements, case histories and relevant abstracts as well as review material.

Papers are being accepted for review and can be sent directly to the Managing Editor, Journal of Hyperbaric Medicine, Undersea Medical Society, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Subscriptions are offered to members of the Undersea Medical Society as a benefit of their participation. As members, the choice of the Journal of Hyperbaric Medicine or Undersea Biomedical Research is offered. The other publication can be obtained for $25 per year. Non-members of the society are invited to subscribe to either quarterly publication at the rate of $50 per year. All inquiries can be directed to the Undersea Medical Society.

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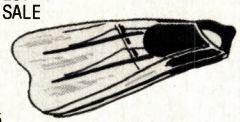


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L-FACTOR BONUS

Lawrence Factor, Inc., the Miami based manufacturer of compressed air purification equipment and scuba compressors, is offering a special gift in celebration of the first anniversary of the introduction of its L-Factor X filter cartridge.

"Lawrence Kaplan, president of Lawrence Factor, said "as a small token to those who have supported our product and to further the spirit of the holidays and our sport, we have decided to include a bonus gift with each order during December, January and February. The gifts . . . come from my personal collection of classic SKIN DIVER Magazines and some date back as far as the 1950s. They're especially interesting to those who have participated in the sport for a long time, sort of like scuba trivia."

To find out how to get your bonus SKIN DIVER Magazine or information regarding the L-Factor X-pendable filter cartridge, contact Lawrence Factor, Inc., 285 NE 185th Street, Miami FL 33179; (305) 652-5998.

CO COURSES

The College of Oceaneering, Wilmington, CA, has created three courses to meet the growing demand for underwater and topside inspectors:

The restructured Underwater Inspection and Non-Destructive Testing Course (Course 250) is the first non-European course to receive official approval of CSWIP (Certification Scheme for Weld-

ment Inspection Personnel), the agency that sets the internationally recognized standards for diving inspectors.

The six-week College of Oceaneering course is an intensive inspection program in the theory, procedures, method of operation, communications, recording of data and documentation of underwater visual and non-destructive testing.

Course 257 has been established as a practical four-day instruction in the use of the EMD Mk III equipment and technique in applied Electromagnetic Testing. The College of Oceaneering is the only facility in the United States sanctioned to offer EMD-III equipment instruction.

Course 258 is a six day practical flaw detection training program designed for Ultrasonic Testing Level II topside and underwater personnel.

SPARE AIR

The Naval Air Research Development Agency has recently completed a two and one-half year study on various systems for underwater escape from downed airplanes, helicopters and other



similar situations. The results designate Spare Air "accepted and approved."

Submersible Systems, Huntington Beach, California, is the producer of Spare Air. In addition to its non diver, emergency applications, it is also used by divers as an alternate air source. Several models are available.

SHERWOOD WEST WAREHOUSE

Sherwood West Corporation has begun construction of a new 18,000 square foot office and warehouse facility in Irvine, California. The company is Sherwood's scuba products distributor for the western U.S.—including Alaska and Hawaii—and the Far East.

When the new warehouse is completed total manufacturing and warehousing space for Sherwood scuba products will surpass 163,000 square feet.

Since Sherwood West opened its doors in January 1981, it has become one of the leading west coast suppliers of diving equipment. The other Sherwood scuba distributors are Eldon Industries of Canada, Toronto; McTier Supply Co., Lake Bluff, IL; Ray Murray Inc., Lee, MA; and Selpac Southeast Corp., Atlanta, GA. Sherwood's factory is in Lockport, New York.

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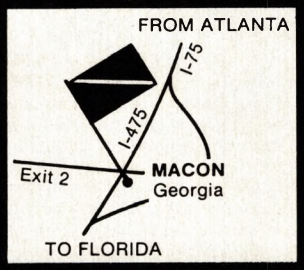
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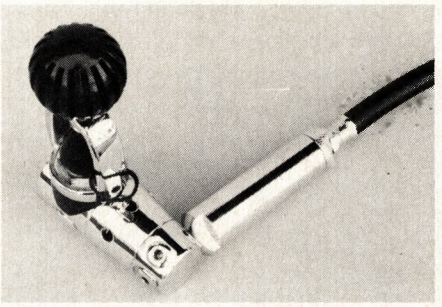
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MOIST-U-AIDER

BY JIM WALKER

I have a friend who has been known to suffer from a dry mouth while diving. His solution to the problem is to take occasional sips of seawater. Well—to each his own. Frankly, I get more than enough salt water accidentally during a dive.

Unless you are diving in potable fluids, not much can be done, while submerged, to soothe a dry mouth and throat. However, something has been done to reduce one of the primary causes. The



photos/Bonnie J. Cardone

cause is breathing dry air and the cure is a device called the Moist-U-Aider.

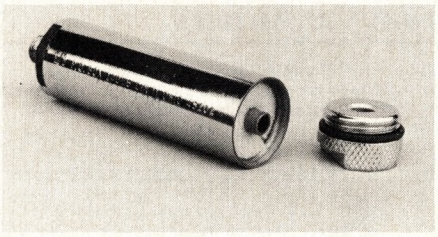
If you've ever hung wet clothes out in a breeze, you know how fast dry, moving air can withdraw moisture. Much the same process occurs in a diver's mouth and throat. The drier the air breathed, the more moisture lost with each breath. And, the air in a scuba tank is extremely dry.

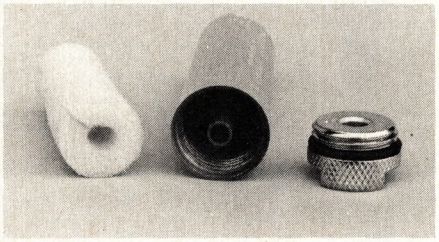
The Moist-U-Aider is designed to humidify the air a diver breathes. Developed and manufactured by Respiratory Systems, Inc., the ingenious little device has no moving parts. It's basically a machined brass tube (chrome plated on the outside) about four inches long. One end of the tube has a male fitting that threads into a low pressure port on a regulator first stage. The second stage hose then threads into a female fitting on the Moist-U-Aider. Inside the Moist-U-Aider is a small sponge that encircles a pickup tube. When the sponge is saturated with purified, distilled drinking water, air blowing through the pickup tube (as the diver breathes) draws the water out of the sponge. This moist air then travels down the hose, through the second stage of the regulator, and to the diver. This is an ultra-fine mist—too much water in the air would be unhealthy.

TESTING

Topside, when comparing the air flow-

ing through my regulator with, and without, the Moist-U-Aider, I found it difficult to detect a difference in the "wetness." However, when you consider the interior of the mouth is wet to begin with, the difference between a few breaths of dry air compared to a few breaths of ultra-fine mist should be hard to detect. When pressing the purge button topside and





directing the air at dry paper, the Moist-U-Aider made an obvious difference (the blast left a moist spot on the paper).

Using the Moist-U-Aider while diving, the air breathed seemed to be what I can only describe as softer or more comfortable. According to Bob Rackstraw of Respiratory Systems, the benefits of the device are most apparent when you are diving for long periods and/or under strenuous conditions.

CARE/OPERATION

The fittings of the Moist-U-Aider are sealed by O-rings and can be connected/disconnected with simple tools. Easy to understand directions are included along with some items of caution that are elaborated on here: (1) Saturate the sponge, then insert it into the Moist-U-Aider. Don't fill the device with water.

(2) Use only purified, distilled water and keep the device clean.

(3) After your day of diving, open the Moist-U-Aider and remove the sponge. Let both parts dry completely. Don't store the device with moisture inside.

(4) Don't use the Moist-U-Aider in temperatures below 36°F.

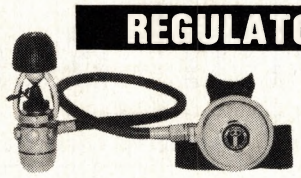
(5) If your regulator first stage has 7/16 inch low pressure ports, you'll need 3/8 inch adapters. Pressurize the system before your dive to make sure the O-rings seat well.

If you suffer from dry mouth/throat while diving, chances are the Moist-U-Aider can help. It retails for $44.95 and comes with a one year limited warranty. Try one out at your dive store or, for information, contact Respiratory Systems, Inc., 31606 Railroad Canyon Road, Canyon Lake, CA 92380.

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Package In 1- We combined the balanced Waterlung X2 regulator with light weight second stage with the light weight Waterlung octopus and U.S.Tech triple console. The U.S.Tech console features oversized nubmers and color coding for easy reading. Next we added the Trinidad jacket B.C.D. with power inflator and cam pack, and an 80 K aluminum tank. Everything you need! Retail $955.00
Sale $545.00



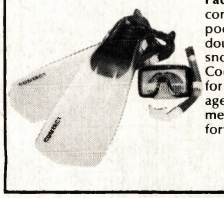
Package In 2- U.S.Tech package - all American made! U.S.Tech balanced Explorer regulator with light weight second stage and light weight octopus, U.S.Tech Blue and Silver jacket BCD with CO2, soft band cam pack, Easy Touch power inflator, two year warranty, and a host of features, U.S.Tech double console with over sized numbers and color coding. Quality and styling. Retail $735.00
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Package In 3- Tekna's T-2100BX regulator with balanced first stage and servo light weight second stage, light weight Waterlung octopus, U.S.Tech double console with over sized numbers and color coding, Parkway's Blue and Silver jacket BCD with power inflator, rapid exhaust, and cam pack (CO2 stubbed), and 80 K Aluminum tank. Great gear at a great price. Retail $959.95
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Package In 4- U.S.Divers Silicone Nova mask with large nose pocket, tempered glass, and double seal, clear bore silicone snorkel, and Tekralene white Contact open heel vented fins for power and snap. This package stands up to harsh treatment, looks great, and is comfortable to use. Retail $115.00
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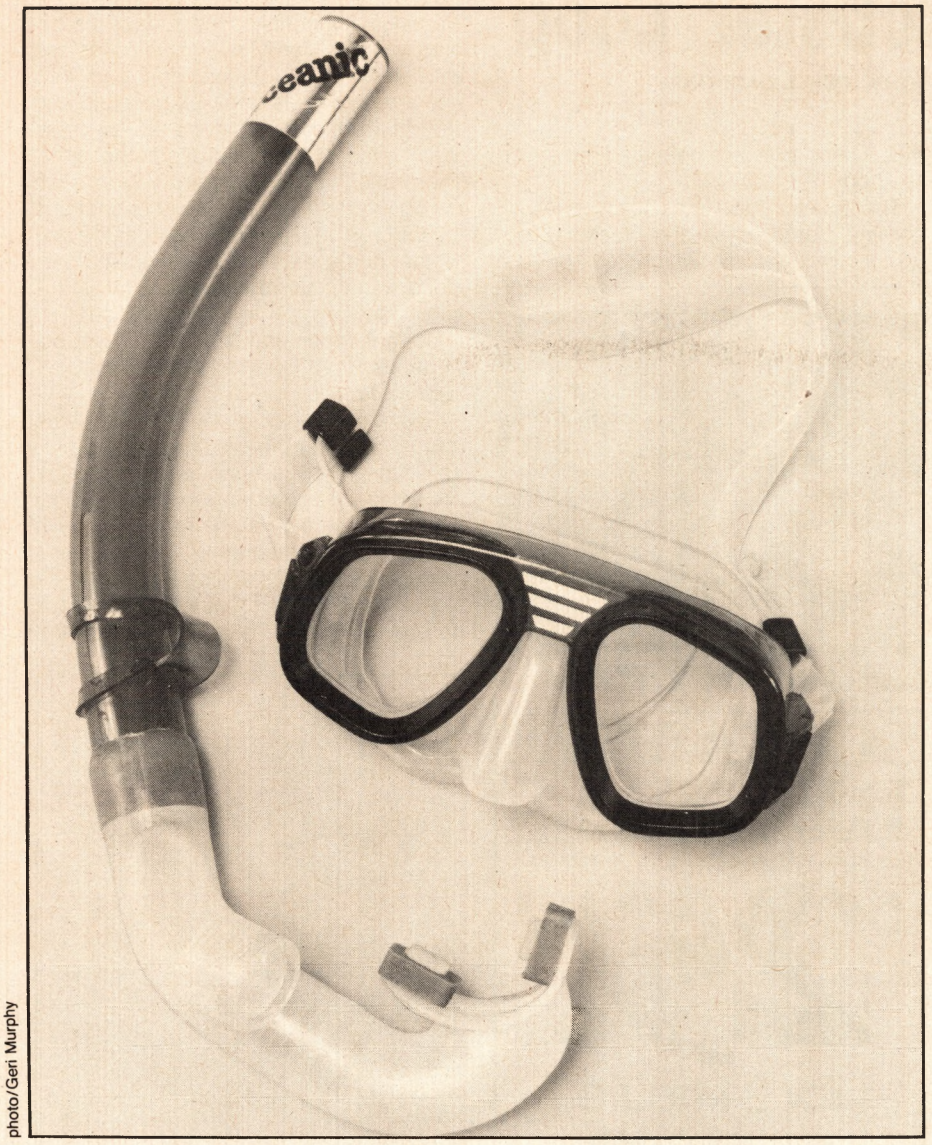
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photo/Geri Murphy

OCEANIC EUROPA

MASK & SNORKEL

BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

The first sort of lenses designed for underwater use were nothing more than goggles. As the years went on, the goggles became masks and the masks got bigger and bigger. Today, the pendulum is returning and the trend is toward smaller masks. And, the Oceanic Europa is one of the smallest—if not *the* smallest—masks on the market today.

Masks have gotten smaller because divers realized that bigger was not necessarily better. Large masks do not fit almost anyone, small masks do. Also, since there are more and more women diving, and snorkeling has become a sport the whole family can enjoy, there is more demand for small masks.

Because small masks fit closer to the face than large masks, they allow greater peripheral and downward vision; they have a lower volume, making them easier to clear. Underwater photographers are more likely to choose a small mask over a larger one simply because they can get closer to viewing ports and viewfinders with lower volume masks.

Besides being small, the Europa has other advantages. It has a translucent surgical grade silicone skirt. By now you should know that silicone rubber is hypoallergenic as well as impervious to ozone. It is is soft and pliable. It will not stiffen with age or otherwise deteriorate as does neoprene rubber. Although you pay more for silicone, it lasts practically forever. Silicone skirts also let more light inside masks, thus models wearing them are more photogenic.

The Europa is an attractive, streamlined mask. It has a high impact, translucent resin frame that comes in blue with white bars; red with white bars; opaque white with red bars; and gray with white bars (and gray silicone skirt). This latter mask is favored by photographers because it eliminates distracting reflections at the surface.

One of the unique features of Oceanic masks is their spring loaded strap locks. Press on one end of the Mask-Loc® and you can pull the strap through quickly and easily, even while you're wearing the mask. Release it and the strap is locked in place. The silicone strap is split into two in the center to provide a secure grip.

The ideal partner for the Europa mask is the Ocean Pro Vented Moldable snorkel. It comes with either a blue, red or gray polyurethane barrel. There is reflective silver tape around the top of the tube. The barrel is large bore and angled to fit around the head, eliminating drag and positioning the top of the tube so it sticks straight out of the water when the user is in a snorkeling position. The silicone mouthpiece has moldable bite tabs and swivels so you can adjust it to accommodate you perfectly. Also available is a smaller silicone mouthpiece for smaller divers/snorkelers.

I have found that moldable bite tabs make a mouthpiece more comfortable and easier to hold onto. They help eliminate jaw fatigue. To individualize these to your mouth you soften them in very hot water, then bite down on them, molding them to your teeth. The tabs can be remolded and are replaceable.

The Ocean Pro is vented. This means it has an extra, very short barrel that comes off the main tube near the mouthpiece. Most of the water in the barrel will drain out of this second tube, via a one-way valve in the bottom, when the snorkel tip breaks the surface. This makes the snorkel extremely easy to clear—just a puff of air seems to do the trick.

The Europa mask sells for $45; the Ocean Pro Vented Moldable snorkel is $25. You can see them both at your Oceanic dealer. For more information contact: Oceanic, 14275 Catalina Street, San Leandro, CA 94577.

Sure Catch Lobster Loop

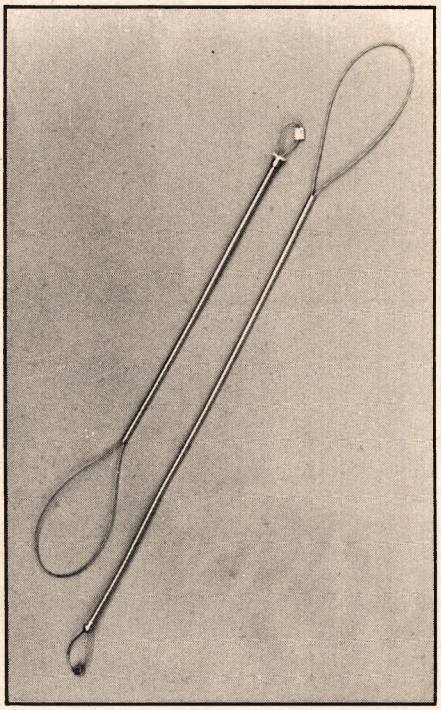
TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE J. CARDONE

The Sure Catch Lobster Loop is an ingenious device designed to increase your chances of catching lobster. If you're a California bug diver, read no farther, this tool is illegal in your state. If you dive where tools are permitted, however, read on!

The Lobster Loop is basically a hollow, chrome plated brass shaft (either 20 or 30 inches long) into which is inserted a plastic coated, galvanized steel cable. An aluminum joiner unites the ends of the cable, which is easily pushed through the shaft and forms loops on either end. You make one loop as large as possible and work it around the lobster's tail, as close to the middle of the creature as possible. Then, pull the cable toward you through the shaft until it is tight. If you cannot see the tail, you can slip the loop over the end of the bug's antenna, working it down close to the carapace before pulling it tight. The loop will not harm the bug, an important consideration should it turn out to be less than legal in length or an egg-bearing female.

Besides increasing your lobster catch and not injuring the creatures in the process, the loop has one other important advantage: It allows you to take—without risk—bugs that are sharing holes with moray eels or sea urchins or whose dens are barricaded by fire coral.

The shaft of the Sure Catch is brass and bends easily. Thus, you can angle it to fit around obstructions in a lobster lair. Afterward, it is just as easily straightened. The manufacturer cautions against bends of more than 20 degrees.



The Sure Catch comes with a set of instructions that give helpful hints on where to look for lobster and exactly how to use this tool. The 20 inch Loop sells for $19, the 30 inch, $23. You can get them both for $40. The Sure Catch is made of corrosion resistant materials and needs little maintenance; just rinse in freshwater when your diving day is over and let dry. For more information write: Sure Catch Lobster Loop, Box 12214, Albuquerque, NM 87105.

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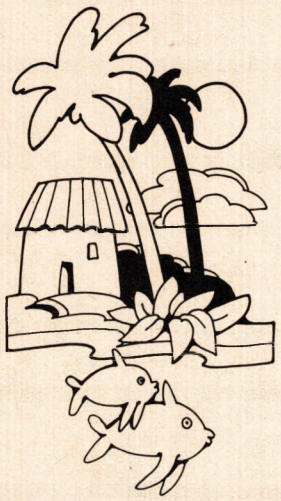
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I Learned About Diving From That Siren Call Of The Deep

BY ERIC HANAUER

The sirens of ancient Greek mythology sang a song so beautiful it lured sailors to their death on the rocks and shoals. Divers have a siren of their own. She lives somewhere in the black waters below 140 feet. I first heard her song years ago in the submarine canyon at Cabo San Lucas and nearly didn't make it back to hear her sing again.

December 1973: The new Baja Road had been completed just a month earlier. In 1986 Baja California is civilized, but in '73 Mexico 1 was still a highway to adventure. My friends and I were determined to be among the first to drive and dive Baja from the new road. There were few maps then and no guidebooks. All we had was an article clipped from the sports pages of the Los Angeles Times and the tall tales of divers and fishermen who had been there. So, with our camper vans, inflatable boats and a small compressor we set off to discover Baja.

I have returned many times since then and have seen many of the wonders the Sea of Cortez has to offer. But nothing matches that first journey in terms of the adventure of new discovery, both of the land and of ourselves.

We arrived in Cabo San Lucas on the last day of the year and prepared to dive its famous canyon. With sheer rock walls dropping off to a depth of several hundred feet, its most remarkable feature is the underwater sandfall. At the newly opened dive shop on the beach we inquired about the location of the falls. The owner told us how to find them and also introduced us to a young woman who had arrived the same day. A marine biology student at a southern university, Joyce needed a buddy.

The first thing we noticed was her jacket, covered with patches depicting all the exotic places she had dived. We looked askance at this sort of advertisement and immediately labeled her "Super Dive Chick" (outside her range of hearing, of course). In our masculine world, no woman wearing all those patches could possibly be a real diver. "Eric, you're the only instructor among us and she is going to need some baby sitting." I welcomed the attractive company underwater, but hoped she wouldn't prove to be too much of a burden.

Joyce and I didn't really have a dive plan. It was a case of "Let's just go down and look around." That was our first mistake. We purged the air from our BC's and headed down. She was armed with a Nikonos, I with a polespear, unaware the area was a game reserve. As we descended, she snapped pictures while I kept alert for the Glory Fish. Visibility was about 40 feet in the nutrient-rich water and the black rock of the precipice made it seem darker than it really was. At 100 feet, I pointed to my gauge, gave the thumbs down sign for descent and shrugged. She nodded yes.

The water turned darker as we headed past 130. I was alert for signs of a nitrogen buzz, but the mental set of self-preservation still prevailed. At 140 feet I asked again and Joyce indicated the descent should continue. I hadn't really planned to go this deep, but wasn't about to let a girl show me up, especially not Super Dive Chick. That was mistake two.

The needle on my depth gauge kept moving and Joyce just kept shooting pictures. I asked once more at 175 feet and once again she nodded yes. With anxious misgivings but conscious of my macho role, I continued down. She was probably trying to prove something too, and I wasn't going to give in first.

At 190 feet I made a decision: Chauvinism be damned, we didn't belong this deep. I pointed up and was relieved to see her agree.

Old divers used to tell how quickly you can run out of air on ascent from a really deep dive. They were right. At 100 feet, I was breathing fumes. Motioning with a finger across my throat, I asked for Joyce's regulator. Surprisingly smoothly, we began to buddy breathe toward the surface. Who was baby sitting who? Fortunately my friends weren't there to see.

At 80 feet, the polespear slipped from my grasp and began to spiral toward the bottom. Joyce broke off to retrieve it and, despite my frantic gestures, she continued down. That was mistake number three. Completely out of air but neutrally buoyant, I made a swimming ascent. Two or three hard breaths were left in the tank as ambient pressure dropped on the way up. When my head finally broke the surface, two thoughts were foremost in my mind: (1) I'm bent. (2) I've killed her.

Scanning the surface for bubbles, I began a slow swim to shore. "Where do I feel pain? How will I tell her family? Do I feel any tingling? Will the Federales throw me in jail?" What seemed like an eternity couldn't have been more than three minutes. Twenty yards in front of me, Joyce's head broke the surface.

"Where the hell have you been?"

"I just followed the slope up. Sorry I couldn't get your polespear."

"Forget that, we're probably bent. Let's find some shallow water and buddy breathe the rest of your tank."

Today's formula for missed decompression stop procedures demonstrates the folly of our effort. But, remembering only that a short stop at ten feet was required, we buddy-breathed in the sand until Joyce's air ran out.

Owing more to luck than skill, we weren't bent. By the following day we could laugh about the experience over a marguerita in the hotel bar. After all, the only casualty had been a polespear. But then something happened that focused things in sharp perspective. The events of the hour that followed remain as vivid flashes in my memory:

A man, running up the steps, shouting about a diving accident on the beach. A teen-age boy lying there, with the blue-gray pallor of cyanosis. My friend, Dan, applying CPR, spitting out blood after every breath. Taking over the compressions, struck by how different a human chest feels from that of a mannequin. A frantic ride over dirt roads to the hospital, while continuing CPR. The Mexican doctor, injecting adrenalin directly into the boy's heart. The father's sobs as the doctor waved us aside and said, "Muerte."

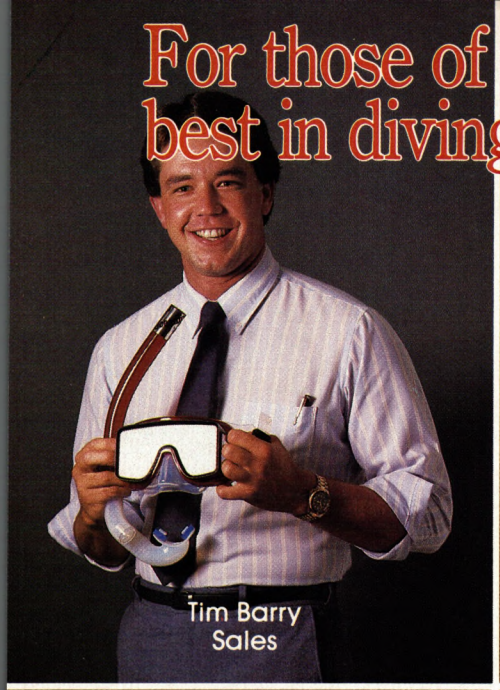
The boy had been diving in the canyon, ran out of air and made a buoyant emergency ascent. Massive air embolism. Joyce and I were more experienced and luckier, but it could have been one of us

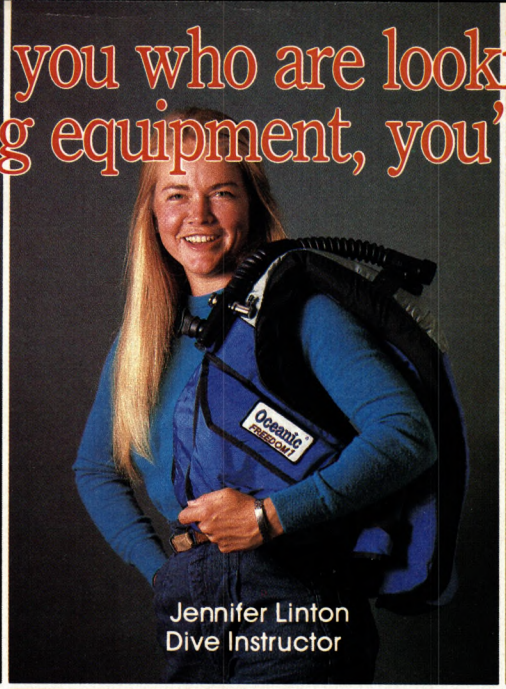
Since that time I have heard that siren call again, at special times in special places. After all, even Ulysses responded to it. In the Odyssey, he ordered his crew to plug their ears, then tie him to the mast so he could hear the song while they steered the ship around the shoals. My deep dives today are carefully planned and done according to that plan. Decompression schedules, to the next greater depth and time increments, are strictly adhered to. A tank and regulator are tied off at ten feet.

In terms of today's mythology, depth can be the dark side of the force for divers. On the few occasions deep dives are necessary or justified, dive conservatively. Plan your dive and dive your plan. Don't let ego override good judgement. I learned that in the canyon at Cabo.

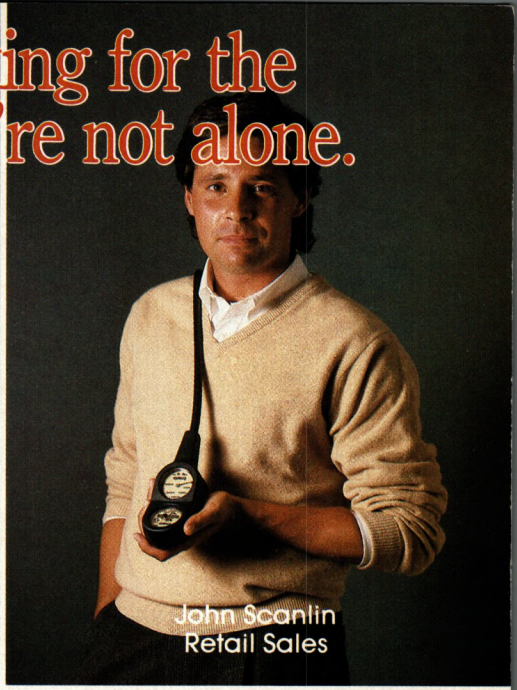
Editor's Note: I Learned About Diving will be appearing every month in SKIN DIVER. Readers are invited to submit their own experiences for possible publication. Send your double-spaced, typed or computer printed manuscript, with self-addressed, stamped envelope, to 8490 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069.

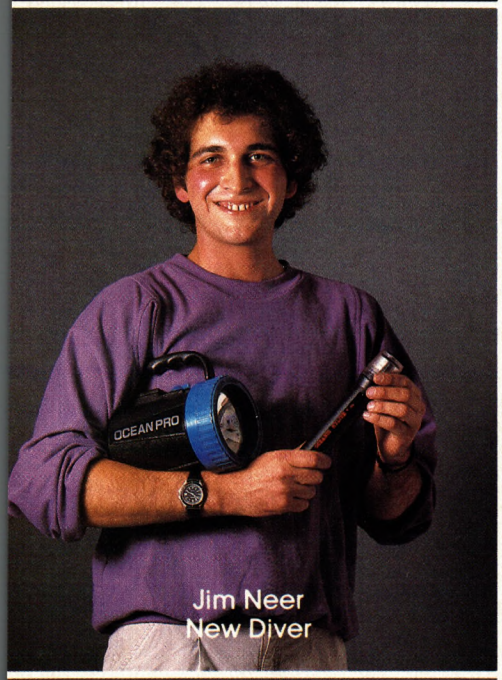
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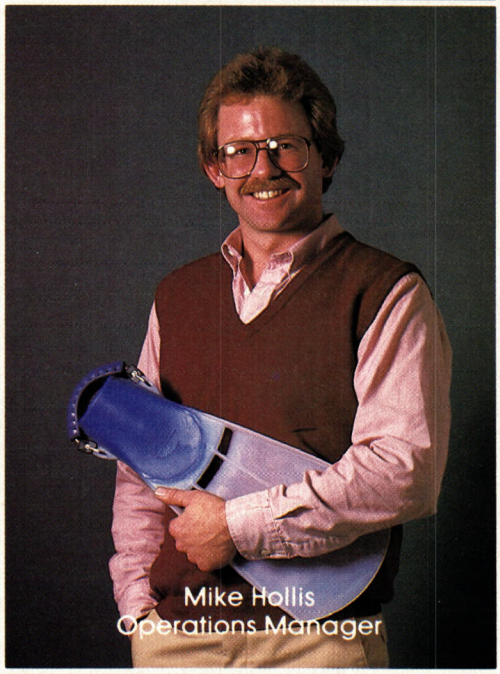


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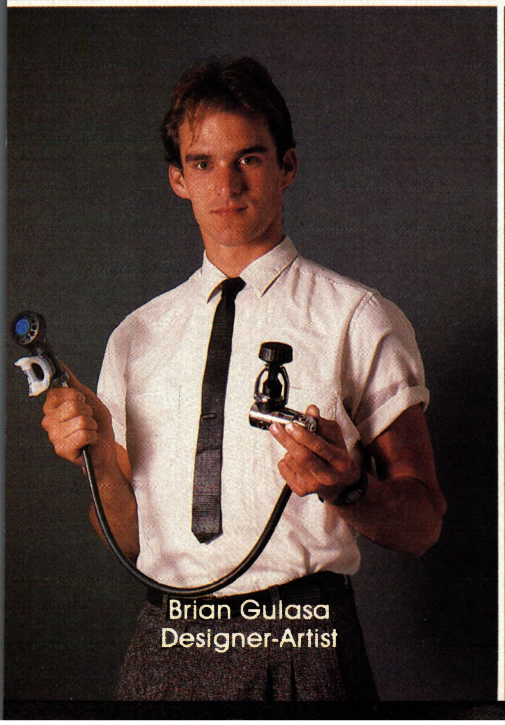
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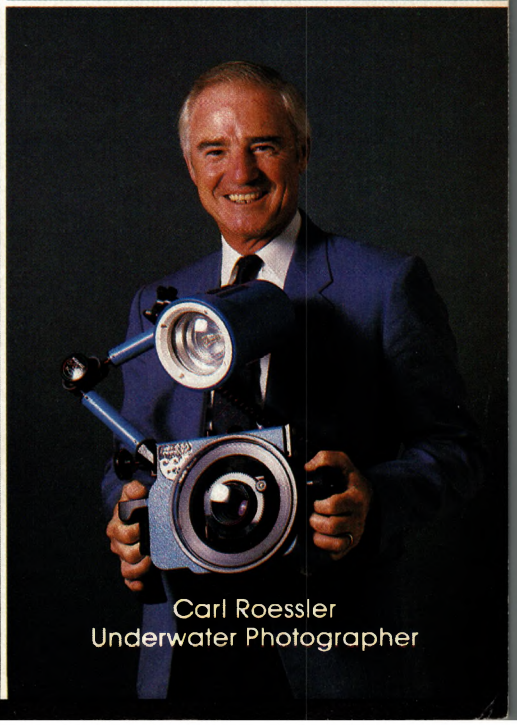
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